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THE CHURCH HISTORY

OF

THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES.

VOL. II.

THE CHURCH HISTORY

OF

THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES.

BY

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THIRD EDITION.

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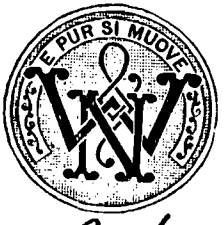
VOL. II.



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NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

Up to the middle of the present volume I have had the advantage of using a version of the work previously prepared for Mr. Williams. I am, of course, responsible for the whole of the translation as now published.

Allan Menzies.

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AS THE ANTITHESIS OF GNOSTICISM AND MONTANISM.

1. THE DOGMATIC ANTITHESIS.

In Gnosticism and Montanism, the Christian life of the first post-apostolic period put forth its most vigorous energy and the richest abundance of its productive power. Gnosticism gives the clearest proof that Christianity had now become one of the most important factors of the history of the time; and it shows especially what a mighty power of attraction the new Christian principles possessed for the highest intellectual life then to be found either in the Pagan or in the Jewish world. The ingredients of Gnosticism were very multifarious; Hellenic and Jewish elements were blended together in it in manifold forms; but Christianity provided all these with a common centre, from which the numerous Gnostic systems proceeded to attempt ever new combinations of the most different kinds. The problem undertaken by all of these systems was that which then occupied the most thoughtful minds, and ever afterwards continued to be the most important subject of Christian religious philosophy, viz., how Christianity was to be interpreted in a general view of the world. And if we couple Montanism with Gnosticism, and consider how it also contributed new and energetic spiritual impulses, and raised fresh questions which were of importance not only as to practical life, but also as to the true construction to be given to Christianity, we receive a very life-like impression of the spiritual movement of the time, and of the restless ferment in which so many elements were confusedly heaving, and meeting and crossing one another in the most various directions. But in view of

these widely diverging movements, a counter-action was necessary, if Christianity was not to lose its original peculiar character. On the one side, the practical religious interest of Christianity, that which the Christian consciousness immediately affirmed, had to be maintained and asserted against the transcendental Gnostic speculations; and, on the other, that millenarian fanaticism had to be combated, which precluded the very possibility of any historical development whatever, and the ground had to be won whereon Christianity could plant itself firmly in the world. The first necessity of all, then, was to have a point of union, by means of which allied and accordant elements might be held together, and an adequate counterpoise be opposed to all heterogeneous and eccentric tendencies alike. This is the idea of the Catholic Church. Already this idea had wrought as a higher power, rising superior to the opposition of Jewish and Gentile Christianity, and uniting both in one common interest. And now, appearing as the antithesis of Gnosticism and Montanism, it attained a more definite consciousness, and, as the circle of its influence extended, showed more and more what were its own true shape and character.

The great struggle with Gnosticism, which lasted through the whole of the second century, and forms so important a part of the history of the development of Christianity and of the Christian Church, was twofold—both dogmatic and ecclesiastical. The whole character of Gnosticism was widely alien to Christianity, as indeed was inevitable from the nature of the elements from which it proceeded. So much was this the case that in each of its forms Gnosticism entered on a fresh battle with Christianity. The antithesis of the two principles, with the dualism resulting therefrom, and the Gnostic repugnance to everything material—the series of Aeons, intended to stand as connecting links between God and the world, and which placed the doctrine of an emanation of the world from God in the place of the Jewish-Christian conception of a free creation—the separation of the Creator from the one supreme God—the co-ordination of Christ with other

divine beings, whose likeness to him could only be regarded as a derogation from his absolute dignity—the whole process of world-development, into which Christianity was interwoven in such a manner that the facts of the redemption accomplished through Christ inevitably lost their moral and religious meaning, and even their historical character: all this stood in the most decided opposition to the fundamental view of the Christian consciousness. Undeveloped as Christian dogma still was—and it was chiefly through its opposition to Gnosticism that it became more accurately fixed and defined—yet from the very first a Christian antithesis could be found for each Gnostic doctrine. On the other hand, a considerable part of Gnosticism possessed an affinity and accordance with Christianity; and as soon as Christianity had spread to some extent among the upper classes, every cultivated man, every man initiated into the ruling ideas of the age, felt that he was directly called upon to answer for himself the same question which the Gnostics were endeavouring to solve. The relation of Christianity to Gnosticism therefore could by no means be one of mere hostility and repulsion; and it was natural that in the controversy the doctors of the Church should take up various positions.

Least of all could those who lived in the circle of ideas whence Gnosticism itself had come forth in the persons of its most eminent chiefs assume an attitude of simple opposition. Alexandria, the birthplace of Gnosticism, is also the birthplace of Christian theology, which in fact, in its earliest forms, aimed at being nothing but a Christian Gnosticism. Among the Fathers, Clement of Alexandria and Origen stand nearest to the Gnostics. They rank γνῶσις above πίστις, and place the two in such an immanent relation to one another, that neither can exist without the other: knowledge cannot exist apart from the actual subject-matter of faith, nor faith without the exaltation of its subject-matter to the form of knowledge. Thus they adopt the same point of view as the Gnostics. It is their aim, by drawing into their service all that the philosophy of the age could contribute, to interpret Christianity in its historical connection, and to take up its subject-

matter into their thinking consciousness. Clement in particular is so completely occupied with the idea of the absolute, which he holds to be the true object of the Christian consciousness, that like the Gnostics he considers the highest task of his Gnosis to be self-elevation from the finite to the absolute. The only distinction is, that he makes the knowing mind, instead of the real world, to be the scene of the process by which the Gnostics saw everything spiritual return, in intimate connection with the whole world-development, into the absolute or the pleroma. As the world and the whole life of nature move in the cycle of the number seven, so it is through the hebdomad alone, Clement says, that the Gnostic reaches his absolute goal. To whatever the hebdomad refers—whether it be a period of time that arrives at its point of repose in the course of seven determined ages, or seven heavens, reckoned in ascending order; or whether, if the unchanging sphere which is close to the intelligible world is to be called the ogdoad—in any case the Gnostic must certainly work his way through the world of birth and sin. For this reason victims are slain for sinners during seven days, and purifications are performed for seven days, because in so many days what is rising into existence attains its completion. The perfect appropriation, however, is the belief, rich in grace, in the Gospel, which is attained through the Law and the Prophets, and the purity which is acquired through perfect obedience, joined with that putting away of all things worldly, by which the soul gives back with thanks the tabernacle that she has used. The true Gnostic is one of those who, as David says, Psalm xv. 1, shall find their rest upon the holy hill of God, in the highest Church, where shall assemble the philosophers of God, the true Israelites, those who are pure of heart and without guile.[1] At this highest stage, according to Clement, Gnosticism or Christianity, as the absolute religion, accomplishes for the Gnostic its highest task; in two ways, theoretically and practically. Theoretically, when the limbs of the body of truth, dissevered as it were and scattered in countless places, are brought together in their unity under his

[1] Strom. vi. 16; vii. 10; iv. 25; vi. 14.

view; for he who combines that which is separated, and brings it into unity, will see without danger the perfect Logos, the truth.[1] Practically, when there arises an entirely passionless tendency of the whole mind and life towards the absolute, making the Gnostic like his teacher the Logos in freedom from passion. For the Divine Logos is purely spiritual: and therefore the image of spirit is seen in man alone, and the good man is in soul like God and divinely formed, and God again is like man, for the characteristic form of each is spirit.[2] To the Gnostic of Clement the whole essence of Christianity is contained in the idea of the Logos. Like the primal being of the Gnostics, the absolute God, as he abstractly is in himself, is simply unknowable. With respect to this absolute God, the Logos alone is the mediating principle, through which the idea of the Absolute becomes realised in the Gnostic, theoretically and practically. But the substance of Christianity consists so solely of the idea of the Logos, that with Clement as with the Gnostics, its historical character is lost in Docetism. The Gnostic Christ belongs so completely to the world of Aeons that he cannot come into any immediate contact with the material world of sense; and so the Logos of Clement is far too exalted and transcendental to enter into the full reality of a truly human existence. Clement himself expressed his Docetism almost without disguise, when he went so far as to say of the human manifestation of Christ that the Logos assumed the mask of a man, and fashioning himself figuratively in flesh, enacted the drama of human salvation.[3] He did not share the dualism of the Gnostics, and therefore could not agree with them in their separation of the Creator from the highest God. The form of Gnosticism most congenial to him was the monotheism set forth in the Homilies. He too identified Judaism and Christianity; not however as the Homilies did, by supposing spurious additions in the books of the Old Testament, but in true Alexandrian fashion, by means of allegorical interpretation, of which Clement and Origen made the most extensive use. The most important point

[1] Strom. i. 13. [2] *Ib.* vi. 9. [3] Cl. ad Gent. cap. 10.

is with Clement the interpretation of Scripture received from the Lord, or the church canon of the accordance and harmony of the Law and the Prophets with the Testament given through the manifestation of the Lord.[1] The task of allegory is therefore to prove the perfect identity of the Old and New Testaments. And it performs the task so completely, that Christianity is shown to be virtually nothing but Judaism with the veil removed. As allegory is never supposed to be merely arbitrary and subjective, Clement regarded it as something traditional; and as the Gnostics were wont to refer to a definite authority, whence they claimed to have received their tenets as a private doctrine, so Clement also appealed to his authorities, from whose hands, as he professed, his Gnosticism, consisting mainly in an inquiry after the allegorical sense of Scripture, had reached him by secret tradition.[2] When we see that the points of contact between Gnosticism and the Alexandrian doctrine are so many, we must attach all the more importance to the fact that, in contrast to Gnostic fatalism and naturalism, Clement and Origen firmly maintained the principle of the freedom of the will, as put forth in moral effort.

The idea of freedom affords a suitable occasion for passing from Clement to Origen. This idea gives a fresh proof how deep was the affinity between Alexandrian and Gnostic thought; and how this age, when it aimed at stating its views not in detached fragments of various subject and character such as the Stromata, but in the unity of a finished whole, could do no other than advance a system analogous to those of Gnosticism. In the system of Origen everything depends on the conception of freedom. Freedom is the principle of morality. Origen then does not proceed from the metaphysical standpoint, like the Gnostics; it is from morality that he set out. Notwithstanding this, however, his system follows the same process as those of the Gnostics. To avoid all infringement on the idea of moral goodness, he assumed that the spirits created by God were at first exactly alike in the possession of the same freedom of the will for good and evil.

[1] Strom. vi. 15. [2] *Ib.* i. 1.

Every distinction in the world springs from freedom, and the different use made of it. The material world itself originated in accordance with the previous results of the freedom possessed by the spiritual beings in the higher world. To suppose the principle of freedom is not only to suppose the possibility of evil, but to take away the need for any further exposition of the real existence of evil. The chief factor in the development of Origen's system, therefore, as in that of the Gnostics, is the Platonic idea of a fall of spiritual beings from the higher world into the material world. The whole origin and organisation of the world, however, is conditioned by the idea of moral good and evil, which rests on the principle of freedom. In Origen's moral view of the world, the material world is to be considered as a place of punishment for fallen spirits, who are placed, in their material vesture, each in that position in the universe which it has deserved by its moral behaviour in the intellectual world. But there is a recovery as well as a fall; and upon the same beginning there ever follows, in the principle of freedom, the same possibility of the consequences which flow from it; and therefore there is an infinite succession of finite worlds in the continuous alternation of fall and recovery. God himself, thus considered, is only the idea of the moral order which is immanent in the world; and this order is the dispensation of definite consequences, conditioned by the righteousness of God, to good and evil deeds according to their moral nature. Thus alone the infinite variety of intelligent beings, who diverge in their freedom in such different directions, is brought to an inner unity, and to an order which compacts them and knits them into one.

Spirit and matter stand with Origen in a different relation to each other from that of the Gnostics; still with him God alone is pure immaterial spirit in an absolute sense; in the fallen spirits, in whom the fire of spirit has grown cold and become soul, the spiritual power, diminished in proportion to the fall, cannot escape the material wrapping and the determining influence of matter. Thus with Origen as well as with the Gnostics everything comes

back ultimately to the antithesis of spirit and matter. In any case, in that doctrine which afterwards proved so offensive to the dogmatic consciousness as the latter came to be more precisely fixed, the pre-existence and fall of souls, we find ourselves in a circle of ideas closely allied to Gnosticism. Here also,—as we may especially see in Origen's Christology, so visibly inclining towards Docetism,—the positive truths of historical Christianity threaten to dissolve into general speculative ideas. Plainly, therefore, no victorious resistance to Gnosticism could ever have proceeded from this quarter.[1]

Quite different was the attitude taken up towards Gnosticism by the two Western Doctors, Irenaeus and Tertullian. In them first do we meet with a Christian polemic which attacks the essential character of Gnosticism. But even they did not attain their end in the way of doctrine so much as in the way of church polity. Acute and pertinent as the arguments for the most part were by which the two Doctors sought to refute the doctrines of the Gnostics in detail, and the whole mode of view on which the Gnostic systems were based, still such a polemic as theirs led no further than to a philosophical and dialectical contest, from which no definite result could ever proceed. As Christianity, as the Gnostics apprehended it, lost its original and peculiar character, it became very important to assume a position from which the cause of specific Christian belief could be maintained with all due emphasis. Above all, it must be clearly shown how antagonistic was the tendency of Gnosticism to the general nature of Christianity. Such was the position which Tertullian took up when in his polemic against Marcion he brought out into clearness and prominence what Gnostic Docetism involved. If, he says, Christ in his fleshly manifestation is found to be a lie, it follows that all that came to pass through the flesh of Christ becomes a lie as well: that he was with men and lived with them is all mere illusion. The sufferings of Christ are then no proper object of faith, for he who has not suffered actually has not suffered at all.

[1] Compare Die Christl. Gnosis, p. 502 *sq.* Theol. Jahrb. 1846, p. 81 *sq.*

Thus the whole work of God is overthrown, and the whole meaning and fruit of Christianity, the death of Christ, the foundation of the Gospel according to the Apostles, is denied.[1] If then Christianity is only what Gnostic opinion deems it to be, it has no objective historical reality; Gnosticism changes the Christian facts into something merely apparent and ideal, something purely subjective. This tendency of Gnosticism, which made it so opposed to the historical character of Christianity, could only be accounted for on the supposition that Gnosticism was a totally different thing from Christianity. Accordingly, it was one of the great points of the polemic of Irenaeus and Tertullian against Gnosticism that they held up to view the heathen origin of the Gnostic doctrines. They not only affirmed, but endeavoured to show in detail, that the Gnostics borrowed the whole contents of their systems from the theogonies of the ancient Greek poets and the systems of the philosophers, changing nothing but the names; that if things and not names were taken into account, nothing would be discovered in all their so-called mysterious wisdom that had not been already taught by Thales and Anaxagoras, Heraclitus and Empedocles, Democritus and Epicurus, Pythagoras and Plato. Hence Irenaeus presents the result of his demonstration in the form of the following dilemma. Either the heathen poets and philosophers, with whom the Gnostics agree so exactly, knew the truth, or they did not. If they knew it, it was superfluous for the Redeemer to come into the world. If they did not know it, how can the Gnostics boast of such lofty knowledge, when in that knowledge they merely agree with those who know not God?[2] The course of the controversy made Christians more and more plainly aware of the relation, not merely of Gnosticism, but of Greek philosophy, to Christianity; and it was therefore natural that the attack should be turned against philosophy itself, as the source of Gnosticism.

How different was the judgment passed by these Doctors as

[1] Adv. Marc., iii. 8.

[2] Compare Die Christl. Gnosis, p. 485 *sq.*, 469 *sq.*

compared with the Alexandrians, upon the value of philosophy, and in particular by Tertullian, who did not shrink from the extremest expression of his opinion! Philosophy, according to them, was only a contradiction of Christianity—an antithesis that could never be adjusted; and they frankly declared the principle that philosophy and Christianity could have nothing in common with each other. The Alexandrians regarded faith as a mere groundwork and first stage, the starting-point of that progress to knowledge by which alone faith arrives at its completion. Tertullian and Irenæus, on the other hand, were determined to know nothing but simple faith, and repudiated as hurtful to the purity of faith every attempt to go beyond it and advance to knowledge.[1] Philosophy itself had called the various views and opinions which divided its schools and sects "heresies," and thus provided the name now commonly applied to all systems and articles of doctrine which seemed to be at variance with the Christian consciousness. There was ample justification, it was thought, for calling philosophy the mother of all heresy. As the Christian consciousness, seeking to resist Gnosticism and philosophy, gathered itself together, became fixed, attained a definite perception of its own distinctive nature, laid firm hold upon its own specific principles, and repelled all that was novel or alien, the opposition it put forth became more and more energetic. Yet this was not a method that could lead to any settled result. Argue and contend with their opponents as they might, the orthodox doctors still shared with the other side a field in which the struggle only entered on a new phase. One would have thought that the dispute with the Gnostics as to what was to be counted Christian doctrine and what was not could have been most easily and simply decided by means of the

[1] Tert. de Præscr. Haer. cap. 7. Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis? Quid academiae et ecclesiae? Quid haereticis et Christianis? Nostra institutio de porticu Salomonis est, qui et ipse tradiderat, Dominum in simplicitate cordis esse quaerendum. Viderint qui Stoicum et Platonicum et dialecticum Christianismum protulerunt. Nobis curiositate opus non est post Jesum Christum, nec inquisitione post evangelium. Cum credimus, nihil desideramus ultra credere. Hoc enim prius credimus, non esse quod ultra credere debemus.

apostolic books recognised on both sides. But the opponents of the doctors, though they did not reject the authority of these books, restricted it in various ways; for it followed from their general distinction of different principles, that they could not look upon every part of the Scriptures as equally divine and equally credible. And it was still more natural that, even where the parties were agreed about the books as a whole, there should be very different opinions as to their sense. Here again, accordingly, as each side interpreted the books in its own way, there was merely opinion against opinion. Each side claiming with equal right the support of Scripture, the dispute could only be decided by some other principle standing above the sacred books. What principle was this to be?

It was at this point of the development of the Catholic Church, now first rising to the consciousness of its idea, that a new and most important step was taken. It was in the contest with Gnosticism that tradition was first placed in that relation to Scripture which it has ever since maintained in the doctrinal system of the Catholic Church. At a time when the canon of the writings held to be apostolic was still extremely unsettled, the whole fabric of Christianity rested on tradition. But what tradition was in its notion and principle, this was not learned till opponents of a peculiar kind had to be dealt with,—opponents who could not be rebutted without founding upon something that was nearer the source than Scripture, and stood above the authority of Scripture. The inmost essence of the question is disclosed to us when we see that Tertullian—in this particular matter much the greatest champion of the Catholic Church—arrived at the conclusion, "Ergo non ad Scripturas provocandum est." Experience had doubtless shown him again and again how utterly inconclusive was any controversy conducted on the basis of Scripture alone. An arena was not to be resorted to where, even at the best, victory ever remained doubtful. Even if in such a controversy (thinks Tertullian) the two sides are equally balanced, still the nature of the subject-matter requires that first of all certain questions should be asked:

who holds the true faith? to whom does Scripture belong? from whom, through whom, and to whom, was delivered the doctrine that makes men Christians? Where truth of doctrine and of Christian belief is found to exist, there also will be found the truth of Scripture, and of the interpretation of Scripture, and of all Christian traditions.[1] Now, to reach the one point from which the whole truth of Christianity depends, we have clearly to retrace the path by which Christianity has come down to us. The first preacher of Christian truth is Christ, after him the apostles; and their name—*apostoli* or *missi*—expresses the principle by which we are to abide. Christ having sent out the apostles to preach, no other preachers may be acknowledged than those instituted by him. For none know the Father save the Son, and him to whom the Son reveals him; now he has revealed him only to the apostles, whom he sent out to preach that which he revealed to them. What they preached, what Christ revealed to them, can be known in no other way than through the churches founded by the apostles, through the living word of their preaching, and the epistles, which they afterwards added to that oral instruction. If this be the case, then it is unquestionable that the doctrine which agrees with the belief of the original parent-congregations founded by the apostles is to be taken as the truth, since it undoubtedly comprises what the churches received from the apostles, the apostles from Christ, and Christ from God. Every other doctrine must of necessity be false, since it is opposed to the truth of the churches, of the apostles, of Christ, and of God. The evidence or criterion of truth is therefore apostolic tradition, or conformity to the doctrine of the apostolic churches.[2] We have here all the elements required to form the idea of tradition. The function of tradition, according to its proper idea, is to mediate. It moves between two more or less distant points, offering to the mind a mediating link between the past and the present. If it is to testify to the truth of Christian

[1] De Praescr. Haereticorum, c. 19.

[2] De Praescr. Haeret. c. 21. Communicamus cum ecclesiis apostolicis, quod nulla doctrina diversa, hoc est testimonium veritatis.

doctrine, it must be capable of showing with certainty that the doctrine deemed Christian by a later age is one and the same with the original doctrine of Christ. It is obvious that the true Christian doctrine can be no other than that which was proclaimed by Christ, and handed on by the apostles; but what doctrine is that which was handed down by the apostles and proclaimed by Christ? To answer this, we must not merely look to the beginning—though no doubt all is referred back to the beginning, since (as Tertullian says) "omne genus ad originem suam censeatur necesse est," nor merely to what has since intervened; there is a third requisite, viz., that our inquiry should proceed from the one point from which alone proceeds a path that will lead us to original Christian truth. This is Tertullian's argument when he refers to the apostolic churches as those which contain the true doctrine of Christ. But since there is not only one apostolic Church, but many, only that doctrine in which all of them agree can be regarded as the true doctrine.[1] We have thus three momenta, each of which is an essential factor in the notion of tradition: viz., origin from Christ, transmission through the apostles, consensus of the churches. Each of these points presupposes the two others: without the agreement of the churches, we cannot tell from what first point we should set out; without the origin from Christ, the whole has no unity of principle; without the transmission by the apostles, the present cannot form a continuous whole with the past. The three elements together give to Christian doctrine, in so far as it rests on tradition, the character of objective truth. It is inherent in the idea of tradition that it is a thing given—that it is originally imparted by Divine revelation. Whatever disagrees with it, whatever deviates more or less from it, is therefore merely a subjective opinion, a product of

[1] This agreement is the criterion of their common Apostolic origin:—Omnes primae et omnes apostolicae, dum una omnes probant unitate communicatio pacis et appellatio fraternitatis et contesseratio hospitalitatis, quae jura non alia ratio regit, quam ejusdem sacramenti una traditio. Tert. de Praescr. Haer. cap. 20. Comp. cap. 28: quod apud multos unum invenitur, non est erratum sed traditum.

human self-will, or a heresy. Those are heretics who stand opposed as individuals to a majority held to be catholic; who esteem their self-made or self-chosen truth more highly than the objective truth of the catholic doctrine.[1] The catholic antithesis to heresy consists in an agreement of doctrine that excludes all arbitrary variety of opinion. In order to a clear apprehension of this agreement, those doctrines which were to be regarded as the main expression of the common conviction were summed up in short propositions, which declared positively that which the antithesis of the adversaries denied. These are the *regulae fidei*, to which even Irenaeus and Tertullian appealed in their refutation of the Gnostics. They represent the first attempts to fix doctrinal conceptions in symbols, and were called forth, like the later formulas, by the attacks of adversaries.[2] It is the second of the above-mentioned three elements of tradition which, standing as a link between the other two, connects them and draws them together. It is therefore the most important of the three, and constitutes the proper region in which tradition moves. Only by transmission through the apostles could the truth that came forth from Christ come to be the accordant doctrine of all the Christian churches. The apostles, however, are merely the men who delivered the doctrine of Christ; they are but the first members of a series that ever increases in length with the process of time. Thus, though the apostolic foundation of the churches is a matter of the utmost importance, yet it is not less important to know who were the successors of the first founders, and whether the other members of the series handed on the doctrine of Christ as genuine and unadulterated as they had received it from the hands of the apostles. The Gnostics threw doubt even on the traditional authority of the apostles; they asserted that the apostles themselves did not know everything; or if they did, still they did not impart everything to

[1] De Praescr. Haer. cap. 37. Haeretici-Christiani esse non possunt, non a Christo habendo, quod de sua electione sectali haereticorum nomine admittunt.

[2] Iren. i. 10; iii. 4. Tert. de Praescr. Haer. c. 13. Adv. Prax. c. 2. De virg. vel. 1.

all. And here they appealed to the contention between Peter and Paul, recorded in the Epistle to the Galatians, and the stern words of blame addressed by Paul to Peter himself respecting his doctrine.[1] And the proof by tradition could not but become less trustworthy as the connecting links in the transmitting series increased in number. But notwithstanding, and even on account of, this uncertainty, the doctors ascribed the highest importance to the fact, which they maintained emphatically, that only among themselves was it possible to point to an unbroken succession of men who had faithfully guarded the doctrine delivered by the apostles.[2] The bishops are the successors of the apostles; and as such they are the depositaries of the apostolic tradition. The episcopate has accordingly the same significance as tradition in the history of the Catholic Church. Tradition is the substantial element of the Catholic Church, the principle which, however widely the Church expands, preserves its apostolicity and unity: but it is from the episcopate alone that tradition derives its concrete reality. Accordingly, the further history of the Catholic Church is to be traced in connection with the idea of the episcopate, the origin and peculiar nature of which must be understood before we can follow the course of that history. We shall see that the case was the same with regard to the episcopate as with regard to tradition. That same need for unity which, in opposition to Gnosticism, called forth the idea of the Catholic Church, and realised it in the form of tradition, continued to operate in the episcopate, through which the Catholic Church first acquired its firm consistency.

[1] De Praescr. Haer. c. 22.

[2] De Praescr. Haer. c. 32: Edant origines ecclesiarum suarum, evolvant ordinem episcoporum suorum, ita per successionem ab initio decurrentem, ut primus ille episcopus aliquem ex apostolis vel apostolicis viris, qui tamen cum apostolis perseveravit, habuerit auctorem et antecessorem. Hoc enim modo ecclesiae apostolicae census suos deferunt, sicut Smyrnaeorum ecclesia Polycarpum ab Johanne collocatum refert, sicut Romanorum Clementem a Petro ordinatum itidem. Perinde utique et ceterae exhibent, quos ob apostolis in episcopatum constitutos apostolici seminis traduces habeant. Comp. cap. 36; Iren. adv. Haer. iii. 2, 2; iii. 3, 1, 2; iv. 26, 2.

2. THE HIERARCHICAL ANTITHESIS.

If we could consider the bishops to be the successors of the apostles, in the sense in which Church tradition affirms their succession, the question concerning the origin of the episcopate would admit of a very simple solution. But the bishops were certainly not the immediate successors of the apostles, and before there were ἐπίσκοποι in the technical sense, there were the πρεσβύτεροι and διάκονοι. The statements contained in the Acts of the Apostles seem to pre-suppose, as a matter of course, that in addition to the apostles there were also presbyters at the head of the first Christian churches, after the analogy of the Jewish synagogue. In the case of the Church of Jerusalem, we are only told that when a special administration of alms became necessary, there were appointed διάκονοι, chosen, in accordance with a proposal made by the apostles, to discharge that function (vi. 1). This church therefore already possessed presbyters; and in the case of the churches abroad, we read of the appointment of presbyters as the first measure taken by the apostles in arranging for their being carried on (xiv. 23). It is very natural to assume that when the apostles founded a Christian Church, they also settled the first arrangements required for its organisation. Still —even if we are in no danger of thinking that the whole constitution of the Church must have been of apostolic institution—we cannot too carefully guard against admitting more pre-suppositions than the nature of the question allows. When we consider how weak the first beginnings of the earliest churches were, and of how few members they consisted, we see that, even had the founders conceived a complete plan of organisation, their choice must have been extremely limited in making their arrangements. In its earliest stage a church might consist only of a few families, or perhaps only of one; and it was a natural consequence that the

family, which served as the main stem for the grafting on of fresh members, should gain a preponderating influence, and guide the movements of the general body. These are the *ἀπαρχαὶ*, mentioned in the First Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (cap. 42), and not only there, but also in the First Epistle of the apostle Paul to the Corinthian Church (xvi. 15, 16). When the apostles proclaimed the Gospel in the country districts and the towns, they appointed, says Clement, their firstlings (*ἀπαρχὰς*), *i.e.* those who first received the Christian faith, *εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν*. The *ἐπίσκοποι* are here placed side by side with the *διάκονοι*; in the same way, in the Epistle to the Philippians (i. 1), the heads of the Church are called *ἐπίσκοποι* and *διάκονοι*; and in general, the *ἐπίσκοποι*, where we first meet them, since like the *διάκονοι* and *πρεσβύτεροι*[1] they are spoken of in the plural, must be equivalent to the *πρεσβύτεροι*. The two names denote the same persons, according as they are regarded as the heads and representatives of the congregation, or as the overseers who watch over the whole body. While the *ἐπίσκοποι* then coincide with the *πρεσβύτεροι*, the *διακονία* seems to contain the original form of the Christian ministry. The apostles, according to Clement, appointed the firstlings rather for those who should believe in the future than for those who already believed. Here it might seem that no more is meant than a *διακονία*, in that sense in which the apostle Paul reports, with approval of the house of Stephanas, the *ἀπαρχὴ* of Achaia, that they have undertaken the *διακονία* for the Christians. But on the other hand we have to consider that in the epistle of Clement of Rome the *διάκονοι* are mentioned side by side with the *ἐπίσκοποι*. If then the *διακονία* of which the apostle speaks involves any leading of the congregation, it can refer to no more than those simple wants which would be felt first when the congregation was coming into existence and form. The apostle's exhortation to obedience towards those who perform the *διακονία* furnishes a probability that the word is to be so understood. The

[1] Compare Acts xx. 17, 28; Tit. i. 5, 7; 1 Tim. iii. 1-8; 1 Peter v. 2, 3.

term itself may mean any service done for the congregation:[1] the word was not unfit to describe the general leadership of a congregation, inasmuch as, during the first stage of the growth of the society, the firstlings were obliged to undertake various exertions which could hardly be looked upon in any other light than as a performance of service for others. But when we find the διάκονοι contrasted with the ἐπίσκοποι, the original ministry has developed two distinct but essentially connected sides. On the one hand we have the superintending authority, watching over the whole society, and providing it with a centre; while the other sphere of official activity includes inferior services of various sorts, especially those relating to internal economy and the support of the needy. From the latter functions the διάκονοι derive their special name, and thus the διάκονοι necessarily stood in a subordinate relation to the ἐπίσκοποι.[2] The ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι of Clement of Rome thus furnish the original idea of the Christian ministry, as essentially consisting of these two parts; but the supposition that the apostles themselves appointed the ἐπισκόπους and διακόνους, in order to give the congregations from the first a definite organisation by means of these standing offices, can only have arisen from the opinions and modes of view of a later age. In a question concerning the foundation of Christian societies, the conduct of Paul must be considered first of all. Let us suppose that, when he founded a church, he thought it indispensable to appoint a standing ministry; such, in fact, is the account given in Acts xiv. 23, with regard to the first church which he founded. Some trace of the existence of these ministries would then certainly be found in the genuine epistles; when, prescribing rules, censuring disorders, or inviting contributions, he would have manifold occasion to address himself to the bishops and deacons. Now it is true that in the series of gifts which he enumerates, and with respect to

[1] It is used of the office of the apostles, Acts i. 17, 25; xx. 24; xxi. 19; Rom. xi. 13. Eusebius, E. H. v. i. διακονία τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς.

[2] Therefore Cyprian reminds the deacons that the apostles "diaconos sibi constituerunt episcopatus sui et ecclesiae ministros."

which he regards various personal qualities as specially fitting their possessors for the various functions and services connected with the organic life of the church, he speaks of a διακονία, Rom. xii. 7, of ἀντιλήψεις and κυβερνήσεις, 1 Cor. xii. 28; and it is possible to recognise in these terms an abstract expression for the concrete names of διάκονοι and ἐπίσκοποι. But no indication of a standing formal office appears; indeed the διακονία of the firstlings of Achaia is spoken of merely as a service voluntarily undertaken. It is not till we come to the later canonical books and the epistle of Clement of Rome (which falls under the same category), that we meet the ministries of the ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι; it is evidently merely a wish to give to the congregational constitution which existed in his time the sanction of apostolic authority which leads Clement to say, cap. 44, that the apostles knew that there would be strife concerning the name of the ἐπισκοπή. For this reason, he says, in their perfect foreknowledge, they instituted bishops and deacons, and afterwards issued a supplementary ordinance,[1] that after their death other tried men should succeed them in their ministry. Those who had been instituted at first by the apostles, or afterwards by other notable men, with the approval of the whole congregation, and had blamelessly performed their service to the Lord's flock, could not, it is urged, be justly removed from their ministry (their λειτουργία, or, as it is called directly afterwards, the ἐπισκοπή, *i.e.* the office of the πρεσβύτεροι.) According to this, both the ἐλλόγιμοι ἄνδρες and the πᾶσα ἐκκλησία took part in the elections to the church offices. The more influential members of the congregation conducted the election, and proposed the names, which were accepted only if the congregation assented. Since those called "notables" are not clerical persons, it is still the congregation with whom the right of election rests; and the original conception to which these first beginnings of the

[1] This is undoubtedly the meaning of the word ἐπινομή. Compare Lipsius, de Clementis Rom. Epist. ad Cor. priore disquisitio. Lips., 1853, p. 20 *sq.* Even such a matter of course as the intention that these offices should be continued in the future could not be imagined without a special apostolic ordinance.

whole future hierarchy lead us back is unquestionably congregational self-government. This self-government is recognised in the Acts of the Apostles, where, in an election (that of the first deacons), which takes place at the invitation of the apostles, the co-operation of the collective number of the disciples is necessary. It is presupposed by Paul; he can only complete an intended excommunication, 1 Cor. v. 3, with the consent of the congregation; and in like manner, with regard to the reconcilement and restoration of the offender, he makes his decision to depend entirely on that of the congregation, 2 Cor. ii. 5 *sq.*

A proof that self-government was originally an essential characteristic of the Christian congregations is seen in the fact that it still existed uncontested in the form of congregational universal suffrage at the time when Cyprian, the Bishop of Carthage, represented the clergy in the full consciousness of their rights.[1] Even the functions afterwards discharged by the clergy alone in virtue of their specific official character were not at first assigned exclusively to the persons at the head of the congregations; it was not in distinction from the other members, but only through them, that they came to do these acts. What at a later time were exceptions attest the universal practice of the early Church. Paul supposes a universal right of teaching when he denies it to women alone, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. But he says also, xii. 28, that God appointed in the Church first apostles, then prophets, thirdly teachers; and thus speaks of the teachers as a class by themselves. The author of the Epistle of James only asks that there be not too many teachers, iii. 1, *sq.*; in the Epistle to the Hebrews, xiii. 7, the readers are admonished to remember the leading men as those who have uttered to them the λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ; and in the Epistle to the Ephesians, iv. 11, after the apostles, the prophets, the evan-

[1] He writes, Ep. 32, to the presbyters, deacons, and the universa plebs: In ordinationibus clericis solemus vos ante consulere, et mores ac merita singulorum communi judicio ponderare. In Ep. 67 he says of the plebs itself that it "ipsa maxime habeat potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel malignos recusandi."

gelists, and the pastors, we find teachers also mentioned. In the Shepherd of Hermas,[1] where episcopi, doctores, and ministri are mentioned together with the apostles, the word doctores certainly does not signify the presbyters as distinguished from the bishops: but the episcopi, who are not distinguished from the presbyters, are merely placed first because (as in the case of the προεστὼς, Justin's Apolog. i. 67), they combine the office of teaching and that of superintendence; and this is not inconsistent with the existence of other doctores also. If we take all the evidence together, it is clear that the work of active teaching, though annexed to the ministry of the Church, was not exclusively attached to it. In later times, therefore, the right to teach could not be absolutely denied to the laity; it was merely required that when they taught they should deliver their discourses in the presence and with the approval of the bishops.[2] Nor, again, do the primitive regulations concerning baptism and the Lord's Supper exhibit any trace of the later specific distinction between clergy and laity. It is true that, according to Tertullian,[3] the right to baptise belonged to the priest highest in rank, that is, to the bishop, and after him, though not without the bishop's approval, to the presbyters and deacons. But the same right, it was affirmed, belonged to the laity also, since what was received *ex aequo* could also be given *ex aequo:* only, they should not use it except in cases of necessity. So with the Lord's Supper; it was the custom of Christendom that only the president dispensed it, as, according to Justin, it is the προεστὼς who blesses the bread and wine; but, asks Tertullian, are not the laity also priests? Where only three are gathered together, though they be all laymen, there is the Church.[4] Thus all that the clergy afterwards claimed especially to be, all that they regarded as their peculiar

[1] Vis. iii. 5. In the Greek text, known to us through Simonides, we find only ἐπίσκοποι καὶ διδάσκαλοι, without the ministri. But immediately after come, in the following order, ἐπισκοπήσαντες καὶ διδάξαντες καὶ διακονήσαντες. Dressel, Patr. Apost. Opera., Lips., 1857, p. 579.

[2] Cp. what is related by Eusebius concerning Origen, E. H. vi. 19.

[3] De baptism., cap. 17.

[4] De exhort. castit.

attribute, was claimed by Tertullian for the laity as a universal right of Christian priesthood.[1]

But though the original spirit of congregational autonomy was still vigorous in the congregations of this period, and asserted itself as of old even where it could no longer be put in practice, yet already there had arisen a special class of ecclesiastical persons, whose official activity comprised all functions relating to the congregations as a whole, and the congregation had thus become divided into two distinct orders. Clergy and laity (laici), or the ordo and the plebs, stood over against each other under those distinctive names; but it is remarkable that even this division was originally quite free from any hierarchical notions.[2] Though the above-mentioned terms convey a definite distinction, yet, as Tertul-

[1] Ritschl proves (1st ed., p. 367; 2d ed., p. 347, *sq.*) with very minute detail that the congregational officials, according to the original view of their relation to the congregation, did not hold, as distinguished from the latter, any special religious or priestly character. This applies also to the power of forgiving sins, to the laying on of hands in baptism, and to the absolution of the lapsed.

[2] The case would be otherwise if, as Jerome says (Ep. 52) the clergy were so named with reference to Deut. x. 9, xviii. 2, because they de sorte sunt domini, or because dominus ipse sors, *i.e.* pars clericorum est. Neander questioned this interpretation, on the ground that it seems inconsistent with the historical usage of the word κλῆρος; but his own explanation erred by making too much of the notion of "lot" in the word. In my essay, Ueber den Ursprung des Episcopats (1838, p. 93, *sq.*), I have pointed out that in the letter of the churches of Lugdunum and Vienna, in Eusebius (E. H. v. 1), where a κλῆρος μαρτύρων is spoken of, and in some passages in the Ignatian Epistles, the word κλῆρος seems to mean a class, and particularly a high class. Ritschl shows this more minutely (1st ed. 398, *sq.*, 2d ed. 390). Κλῆρος means degree, rank, as where (Eusebius, E. H. iv. 5) it is said of the sixth bishop of Alexandria, τὴν προστασιάν ἕκτῳ κλήρῳ διαδέχεται. Κλῆρος is equivalent to τάξις. Now there is also a distinction of κλῆροι within the Christian ministry, and here κλῆροι are successive offices, successive steps of rank. Thus Irenaeus says (Adv. Haer. iii. 3) of the Roman bishop, Eleutherus, that he held τὸν τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς κλῆρον in the twelfth place from the apostles. Κλῆρος is here a rank, as even in the Acts (i. 17, 25) the apostolic office is termed ὁ κλῆρος τῆς διακονίας ταύτης. In the same way we hear of a κλῆρος τῶν μαρτύρων, a class of martyrs. A whole church too is called κλῆρος, as when Ignatius wishes that he may be found ἐν κλήρῳ Ἐφεσίων χριστιανῶν, who had always been in accordance with the apostles. The Christians of Ephesus had thereby gained precedence before others, and thus here the conception of a higher rank is attached to the word κλῆρος. The special meaning of the word, its exclusive transference to a particular order—that of ecclesiastical officials—is undoubtedly analogous to the meaning of the expressions "rank," "position,"

lian clearly says,[1] the conception of the clerus still contains nothing that tends to remove the original and essential equality of the two orders. The clergy had only an honorary precedence above the other members of the congregation. They are no doubt by this time considered priests; their ordo is not merely the ordo ecclesiasticus, but also the ordo sacerdotalis; and it is precisely in contrast to the priesthood that the words λαὸς, λαικοὶ, bear their peculiar meaning, since a λαικὸς ἄνθρωπος, as defined by Clement of Rome, cap. 40, is one who is neither ἀρχιερεὺς, nor ἱερεὺς, nor Levite. Accordingly, while the λαὸς is the congregation of the people of Israel, the λαικοὶ are those who simply belong to it, without holding any especial place in it. But the existence of the priestly character is not yet supposed to place clergy and laity in a definite antithesis. The laity too are priests, and the offering that makes the priest a priest is only prayer; that is, the prayer of thanksgiving at the Lord's Supper, offered together with the gifts brought by the congregation.[2] Thus, notwithstanding the two separate designations, the line separating the two orders would be as yet only a vague and wavering one, and the self-governing character of the congregation would not be by any means effaced. So also

with us. Although every one has a certain rank and position, yet we speak of rank and position chiefly in the case of those who hold a higher place than others in the social scale. The honour which gathered round the standing offices of the Church caused accidental privileges, such as that of martyrdom, to be less thought of, and the clergy, in the original sense, came to be considered, as we say, persons of rank and position. In the passage, 1 Peter v. 3, where the presbyters are admonished μὴ κατακυριεύειν τῶν κλήρων, the κλήροι, which are equivalent to ποιμνίον, can only be the various classes or orders which form the congregation—the flock. Here then κλῆρος still has its wider meaning. The narrower one meets us first in the work of Clement of Alexandria: τίς ὁ σωζόμ. πλούσ. cap. 42, 1, where it is related that the apostle John, going from Ephesus, journeyed round about the country: ὅπου μὲν ἐπισκόπους καταστήσων, ὅπου δὲ ὅλας ἐκκλησίας ἁρμόσων, ὅπου δὲ κλήρῳ ἕνα γέ τινα κληρώσων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος σημαινομένων; *i.e.* in places where a college existed already, he introduced a member into the existing body of clergy. Tertullian's equivalent for κλῆρος is ordo. This word with him is sometimes simply opposed to plebs, sometimes is accompanied by the definition ecclesiasticus or sacerdotalis.

[1] De exhort. cast. c. 7. Differentiam inter ordinem et plebem constituit ecclesiae auctoritas et honor per ordinis consessum sanctificatus.

[2] Cf. Ritschl, 1st ed. p. 404 *sq.*, 2d ed. p. 396.

with the distinction of the presbyteri and the episcopi. Even after the latter had become something quite different from the former, both the name episcopi and the thing itself continued to be interchangeable with the name and the function of "presbyteri:" and it was the presbyters in whom the original spirit of congregational self-government longest survived. With Clement of Alexandria and Irenaeus the distinction between presbyter and bishop is still merely relative. It is true that Clement speaks of deacon, presbyter, and bishop, as three successive steps in ecclesiastical office. But he distinguishes only two official characters—that of the presbyters and that of the deacons: the work of the presbyters in matters of doctrine and discipline, he says, is concerned with improvement, that of the deacons with serving.[1] Irenaeus often uses the two terms presbyteri and episcopi as exactly equivalent; he argues in the same way with respect to the successiones of the presbyteri and the successiones of the episcopi; he even calls the bishops of Rome πρεσβύτεροι, and unhesitatingly gives the office of the presbyters the name episcopatus.[2] In agreement with this we find that no strict line of demarcation subsisted as yet between the functions exercised by the bishop and those of the presbyters. On the one hand, nothing might be done in the congregation against the will of the bishop; baptisms and ordinations could not be performed without his sanction. But, on the other hand, the presbyters also had power to perform both rites, which could scarcely have been the case if any essential distinction between their office and that of the bishop had been conceived to exist. Such appears the relation of the two orders in a canon of the synod of Ancyra, in the year 314. There is reference to the same state of matters in a resolution of the fourth Council of Carthage in 398, which commands that, at the ordination of a presbyter, all the presbyters and the bishop shall together lay their hands on the head of the candidate. This can only have been an ancient custom, derived from the time when presbyters and bishops were on an equality, and the bishop, as compared with

[1] Paedag. iii. 12; Strom. vi. 13, vii. 1. [2] Adv. Haer. iii. 2, 2, iv. 26.

the presbyters, was only *primus inter pares.* The original equality was maintained longest in the Alexandrian church. Till the time of Bishop Demetrius (190-232), there was in all Egypt only the one bishop of Alexandria, and the twelve presbyters appointed, as was alleged, by Mark the Evangelist, had the right of choosing the bishop or patriarch out of their own number. Bishop Alexander, soon after the beginning of the fourth century, first fully succeeded in bringing the presbyters in Alexandria into the same subordinate relation to the bishops which existed elsewhere.[1]

We must place ourselves mentally in the midst of all these circumstances, so illustrative of the original self-governing character of the Christian congregations, if we wish to obtain a correct idea of the importance of the episcopate in reference to the development of the Catholic Church. Self-government did not quite disappear so long as the distinction of the πρεσβύτεροι and ἐπίσκοποι was merely relative and wavering. The change introduced by the episcopate consisted in this: that the relative distinction passed into one absolute and specific. The presbyters are many in number, but it is essentially inherent in the idea of the bishop that the bishop is only one. As the one, the one in himself, he is something essentially different from the presbyters, who are what they are only as a plurality taken together. The question has been stated as turning upon the distinction between the congregational office and the church office.[2] If the bishop too is but a

[1] Ritschl, 1st ed. p. 431 *sq.*, 2d ed. p. 419. The question as to the origin of the episcopate, which in the above citations also appears in Alexandria as the original form of congregational constitution, is answered by Ritschl, p. 434, by a reference to Jerusalem. According to Ritschl, the institution of a bishop and twelve presbyters appointed, it is said, Rec. iii. 66, vi. 15; Hom. xi. 36, in Caesarea and Tripolis by the Peter of the Ebionites, is paralleled by the relation of the twelve apostles to the Lord. This relation was afterwards applied to the constitution of the Jerusalemic congregations: Hegesippus states (Eusebius, E. H. ii. 23) that James, as standing in the place of the Lord, undertook with the apostles the guidance of the congregation. This peculiar Jewish-Christian episcopate is to be distinguished from the Gentile-Christian, which was developed out of the office of presbyter.

[2] Rothe: die Anfänge der christlichen Kirche und ihre Verfassung. Wittenberg, 1837, p. 153 *sq.*

congregational official, then he is merely that which the presbyter is, placed in a higher degree. If then a specific distinction does exist, it can only be found in the fact that the idea of a bishop is not fully expressed in and exhausted by the relation that he bears to the single congregation over which he presides: that the bishop in that relation is conceived as also representing the Church in general, as an organ of the unity and authority of the Church as a whole. Since the relation of the Church to the congregation is that of the universal to the particular, the question is this, Whether the universal is determined by the particular, or the particular by the universal. If we start from the self-government of the congregations, then we find the congregation summed up in the presbyters and bishops, as its representatives, in whom its unity is set forth. The latter are thus, as it were, only an abstraction from the undetermined number of the individuals who together compose the congregation. In them, as the representatives and organs of the congregation, we merely find, in a new form of presentation, that which the congregation itself is. They are nothing without it; they are what they are only through it. But, having begun by proceeding from the many to the one, from the particular to the universal, we find that the relation of the one to the other is capable of turning round so as to become the very opposite. The one is now not a mere abstraction from the many: on the contrary, the many is determined by the one, the particular by the universal. Such is the relation which the bishop, in the proper sense, as not merely relatively, but absolutely and specifically, distinct from the presbyters, holds to the congregation. The latter is appendant to the bishop, as to its head, and is what it is only through him. It is only when we state the question thus that it can be said to turn on the distinction between the congregational and the church offices. If the Church in general, and not the individual congregation, is beheld in the bishop, then it is the Church in its relation to the congregation, which, as universal, as the source of principle, determines the latter. The question for our investigation is, therefore,—what brought about the change and reversal by which the

bishops, instead of standing on one line with the presbyters, as hitherto, rose so far above them and the congregation that the congregations lost their self-governing character, and came to stand in a position of simple dependence on the bishops?[1]

The cause of the change lay in the tendency to unity which was a necessary part of the idea of the Church. As the presbyters represented in their own persons the congregations, so among the presbyters the need necessarily came to be felt that one from among themselves should represent the rest, and stand at the head of the whole. But where there was this tendency to find a representative head and centre for the whole institution, it was inevitable that the unity to which all was concentrated should at last gain absolute preponderance, and bring all else into subordination and dependence to itself. Further, every congregation,—like

[1] Here is a point from which different views may diverge. According to Rothe (in the above-mentioned work) the episcopate is a direct institution of the apostles. In order that the power of the keys, the peculiar and complete authority, the sovereign governing power, the divine right, with which the apostles presided over the Church, might not disappear at their death, those of them who were alive after the year 70 made arrangements for the organisation of a Christian Church, which in the Ignatian Epistles appears in full existence (p. 354 *sq.*). The historical data on which Rothe depends for the support of his position are so evidently deficient in all probative force, that they need not be considered any further: cp. against his view my essay Ueber den Ursprung des Episcopats, Tüb. 1838, and Ritschl, 1st ed. 423 *sq.*, 2d ed. 410 *sq.* The key of Rothe's position is his opinion as to the genuineness of the Ignatian Epistles. Ritschl also considers these epistles to be genuine: but only in the Syrian text. They therefore serve him only in a very limited sense; he dates the origin of the episcopate as far back as the beginning of the second century. In the Epistle to the Romans, cap. 2 (Ritschl argues) Ignatius terms himself bishop; so in the Epistle to the Ephesians, cap. 1, he calls Onesimus their bishop; in the Epistle to Polycarp, "the bishop of the church of the Smyrnaeans," he distinguishes Polycarp clearly from the presbyters and deacons, cap. 6. The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians warrants us in affirming the existence of the same form of constitution in the congregation of Smyrna, about the middle of the second century. Ignatius only knows the episcopate, however, as a congregational, not as a church office. The monarchical episcopate thus existed in its acknowledged rights, at the beginning of the second century, at Antioch, Ephesus, and Smyrna, with attributes however which show it to have been a congregational office only, and bearing a relation to the congregation entirely similar to that set forth by Clement of Rome (Ritschl, 2d ed. p. 402 *sq.*). Upon the doubts as to the genuineness of the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians see Hilgenfeld, die apost. Väter, p. 271 *sq.*

the Church in general, to which the individual congregation, as a member of the one body, belongs—has its principle of unity in Christ. Now the more vividly believers became conscious of the relation held by Christ to the whole body of the Church, and to each individual congregation, the more directly were they impelled to set forth externally that relation to the one Lord of the Church, by means of a representative placed at the head of each body, in whom, as it were, the congregations beheld Christ himself and his relation to their body.

It is not without reason therefore that the angels, to whom the Epistles to the seven Churches of the Apocalypse are addressed, have been regarded as an expression of the idea of the episcopate. As they are seven in number the Church general is represented as made up of distinct individual congregations. The seven golden candlesticks, Rev. i. 20, are seven congregations, and the seven stars in the right hand of Christ seven angels; thus it is part of the notion of a congregation that it should have an angel. And since the stars, answering to the seven angels, are all together in the hand of Christ, and so have their unity in him, the angels of the congregations can only be meant to express the relation which binds each individual body to Christ as the one head of all the congregations and the whole Church. In order that the relation of Christ to a community may be conceived as living and intimate, there must be a personal and concrete unity, representing the congregation, by means of which that relation itself may also be contemplated as personal. Through the need of unity, which made the angels of the Apocalypse the ideal representatives of the Churches, and gave that relation such a tangible form in them, in their mediative position between Christ and each Church,—through the same need of unity it was, that such representatives of the same relation came in actual fact to stand at the head of the several bodies, in the persons of the bishops. How strongly the need was felt to have the relation between Christ and the Church set forth in a living person, appears from the position which the James whom we know from the Acts

and the Epistle to the Galatians held with respect to the body of believers at Jerusalem. As the Lord's brother, he was their chief, or, as he is called, at least in the pseudo-Clementine writings, their bishop; and after him Simeon followed in the same position, also because he was a blood-relation of Jesus.[1] Here we have a very plain indication of an endeavour to give as concrete a reality as possible to the bond that joined the congregation to Christ. It is thus plain, that to the mind of Christians something always seemed to be wanting in the congregational organism, unless they saw by immediate observation that the relation between themselves and Christ was maintained by an actual person, viz., by the bishop, as the representative not so much of the congregation as of Christ himself.

But all this would not have been enough to draw forth the bishops so decidedly from their original identity with the presbyters, and to confer upon them what we may call their position of sovereignty as opposed to the presbyters and to the congregation. For this it was needed that circumstances should arise, which should give that endeavour after unity such a fulness of energy and such a practical importance as it had not possessed before. It is beyond doubt, that when the heresies threatened the Christian community with their continual encroachments and their continual tendency to dissolve unity, the episcopate, in the more definite form which it assumed in the course of the second century, acted as a counterpoise to the danger. The great movement occasioned by Gnosticism not only woke to consciousness the idea of the Catholic Church, but was followed by another equally important result; it called forth a counter-action, and this counter-action could find its special aim and end only in the episcopate. It was the episcopate which not only, in opposition to the eccentric, vaguely-straying, dissolving, and decomposing tendency of the heresies, established a firm central point which held all together, and drew to itself all allied elements, but also taught Christians, instead of adapting their frame of mind to the transcendental

[1] Euseb. E. H. iii. 11.

supernatural world, to stand on the firm ground of historical reality and present wants. It was the episcopate which sought and found an answer to the problem how a Christian church could assume a definite form. It was the episcopate which so cooled and moderated the strained ecstatic temper of millenarian belief, that it more and more gave place to a rational sense directed to practical objects; which so far reconciled the world and the Christian mind which had fallen out of relations with the world, that Christianity, founded on the broad basis of a Catholic Church, became able to enter on the path of its historical development.

Even in the Pastoral Epistles of the New Testament Canon we see the close connection between the tendencies of the Church, now forming its constitution, and fixing and shaping itself into the episcopate, and the heretical phenomena of the post-apostolic age. The origin of these Epistles is to be placed in a time at which the heretics described in them—who, to judge by the chief traits by which they are characterised, can only be taken to be the Gnostics of the second century—were attracting much public attention. To combat these heretics is the chief object of all the three Epistles alike. There was nothing that could contribute to check them so effectively as a faithful adherence to the doctrine that had been delivered, and a well-ordered constitution of the congregations under able heads. Accordingly, the Epistles contain a series of monitions and precepts, chiefly referring to church constitution. The oldest of the three, the Second Epistle to Timothy, while it perceives the full magnitude of the evils which threaten the Church through the heretics, confines itself to directions immediately addressed to Timothy himself, to meet the evil to the best of his power.[1] No orders are given respecting the more general regulation of the Christian congregations; only in the admonition of ii. 2 a solicitude of a wider range, including the future in its view, appears. The Epistle to Titus, on the other hand, begins at

[1] Cf. especially, ii. 14 *sq.*, iii. 1 *sq.*, iv. 1 *sq.*, where the great theme of the Epistle is compendiously stated.

once with general instructions referring to the πρεσβύτεροι and the ἐπίσκοποι, i. 5, and occasioned by the heretics, on account of whose conduct, the Epistle expressly states, these precepts are necessary, i. 10. The circle to whom these prescriptions and reminders is addressed is very large, embracing not merely the presidents of the congregations, but the whole of the members of the Christian community. This is even more the case in the First Epistle to Timothy. In the opening of this Epistle also the heretics are brought forward, and described in very clear terms. From general human relations the writer passes, iii. 1, to those which are ecclesiastical, and says what he thinks needful with regard to the ἐπίσκοπος, v. 2, the deacons, v. 8, the πρεσβύτεροι, chap. v. 17. Though the episcopate in the stricter sense is not spoken of, the tendency leading to it is very visible. We are enabled to observe very clearly the form which things are beginning to assume, when we find here in the first instance only the general principles according to which the foundation of the constitution of the Christian congregations is to be laid. Though we must not yet suppose a bishop in the later sense to be meant, still it is noteworthy that already the ἐπίσκοπος in his unity is distinguished from the plurality of the deacons and πρεσβύτεροι, Titus i. 7; 1 Tim. iii. 2.[1]

The chief authorities for the history of the development of the episcopal idea are the writings, also pseudonymous, which have come down under the names of Clement of Rome and Ignatius the bishop of Antioch.[2] Their coincidence in this point is the more

[1] Comp. my work on the Pastoral Epistles, p. 8 *sq.*, 54 *sq.*

[2] By the very recent discovery of a Syriac recension of the Epistles of Ignatius, containing only the three Epistles to the Ephesians, the Romans, and Polycarp, a fresh aspect has been given to the much-discussed question of the genuineness of these writings. Those who are unwilling to give them up as authentic remains of a Christian Father, but yet see difficulties in the appearance of so strong a hierarchical tendency at so early an age, as well as in other phenomena of the Epistles, now find their views fully confirmed by the briefness of the Syriac text. On the other hand, the number of those who still defend the genuineness of the seven Greek Epistles continues to decrease. Among the latter is Uhlhorn: das Verhältniss der kürzeren griechischen Recension der Ignatianischen Briefe zur Syrischen Uebersetzung, in Niedner's Zeitschrift für Histor.

remarkable, since the two represent quite different tendencies. Ignatius is a decided Paulinist, while Clement, in the name of his apostle, Peter, acknowledges the strictest Judaism. While they warn against heresies and schisms, and exhibit their danger, they insist no less emphatically on the importance of the episcopate as the Church's sovereign power, representing God and Christ. The fundamental thought which animates both writers alike is, that neither for the individual, nor for the aggregate, is there any salvation but in the unity which ascends to the bishop, to Christ, and to God; that as soon as this union is abandoned, the Christian society is exposed to all the dangers of false doctrine and sin, of the most melancholy division and dismemberment.

Agreement with the bishop is the ever-recurring, the most urgent admonition of the pseudo-Ignatius. Christians must hold to the bishop alone, and do nothing without him, as the Lord did nothing without the Father, but everything in unity with

Theol., 1851, part 1; among the former Bunsen, the chief representative of that opinion: Ignatius von Antiochien und seine Zeit, Hamburg, 1847. Die drei ächten und die vier unächten Briefe des Ignatius von Antiochien, Hamburg, 1847. Ritschl, 1st ed. 577 *sq.*; 2d ed. 402, 453 *sq.* Lipsius, über die Aechtheit der Syrischen Recension der Ignat. Briefe, in Illgen's Zeitsch. f. Histor. Theol., 1856, part 1. With regard to the Greek text of the seven Epistles, Lipsius affirms, p. 62, that, considering its views as to the doctrine of Christ, the particular heresies which it combats, and finally, its doctrine of the episcopate, we are compelled to suppose that it dates from a time certainly not earlier than cir. 140; while the Syriac text, in all these respects, shows traces of an earlier origin, and has every claim to be acknowledged as genuine. The consequence of the discovery of the Syriac Epistles in the desert of Nitria (edited by Cureton: The Ancient Syriac Version of the Epistles of St. Ignatius, etc., London, 1845, and Corpus Ignatianum, London, 1849), has been that, in proportion as the Epistles in this form are maintained to be genuine, the spuriousness of the Greek Epistles, already so well demonstrated, is placed beyond doubt. To the historian, however, the most important result of the discovery is that in these spurious Epistles he obtains a most significant document for the history of the constitution of the Christian Church in the middle of the second century. If this is established, the question as to the genuineness or spuriousness of the Syriac text is of no very great moment in itself; but it can only be answered in the latter sense. Compare my reply to Bunsen, Tübingen, 1848, and Hilgenfeld, die apost. Väter, p. 187, 274. Lipsius has supplemented his essay, named above, by a further essay, über das Verhältniss des Textes der drei Syrischen Briefe des Ignatius zu den übrigen Recensionen der Ignatianischen Literatur, in the Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, Leipz., 1859, p. 1.

him. If we are subject to the bishop, as Christ was to the Father, then we live not after the manner of men, but after the manner of Christ, who died for us, that in belief in his death we might escape death.[1] The command of the Spirit is to do nothing without the bishop, to love union, to flee from schisms, to imitate Christ, as Christ imitates the Father. Especially, no ecclesiastical event may take place without the bishop. The eucharist is not to be deemed duly and validly performed, unless performed by him, or with his sanction. Where the bishop is, there the congregation is, as the Catholic Church is where Christ is. It is not allowed to baptise or to hold an agape without the bishop: only what he approves is pleasing to God; only so can whatever is done be done surely and validly. He who honours the bishop is honoured by God; he that does anything without the knowledge of the bishop serves the devil. He who belongs to God and Christ is also with the bishop. The happiness of those cannot be too highly esteemed, who are as entirely one with the bishop as the Church is one with Christ, and Christ with the Father, to the end that all may accord in unity. He who is not within the altar lacks the bread of God. If the prayer of one or two can avail so much, how much more that of the bishop and the whole congregation? Therefore the bishop may not be resisted; to be subject to God, we must look to the bishop as to the Lord himself, and honour him, as we honour Christ the Son of the Father.[2] The bishop is therefore even called the substitute of God, the προκαθημένος εἰς τόπον Θεοῦ; he that hearkens to him hearkens not to him, but to the Father of Jesus Christ, as the ἐπίσκοπος πάντων. He that deceives the bishop deceives not him who is visible, but deceives the Invisible. The visible bishop is in the flesh (ἐν σαρκὶ ἐπίσκοπος), in bodily and material fashion, what God or Christ is in invisible spiritual fashion.[3] The fundamental idea of the passages relating to the episcopate may there-

[1] Ep. ad Magn. cap. 7; Trall. cap. 2.
[2] Philad. cap. 3. 7: Smyrn. cap. 8. 9; Eph. cap. 5. 6; Trall. cap. 3.
[3] Magn. cap. 6. 3; Eph. cap. 1.

fore be correctly defined thus: "The bishops are essentially the representatives and organs of the unity of the Church, inasmuch as it belongs to the specific character of the episcopate, that they are the immediate representatives, empowered delegates, and organs of God and Christ. In them Christ has, so to speak, multiplied himself; in them he has given himself within the compass of Christendom a universal presence which can be apprehended by the senses. In all the congregations it is he who acts and guides the vital movement through his organ the bishop. Thus in reality it is one and the same person who is at the head of each separate congregation, although his representatives and organs are individually different. And thus all the congregations are joined together in the most intimate and pervading unity, while the condition of that unity is, that there be an organic connection between each community and its bishop."[1]

The same fundamental view of a system of ecclesiastical constitution based on the episcopate is contained in the pseudo-Clementine writings. As Mosaism and Christianity are here identified, and both are derived from a primitive revelation and a primitive religion, so the episcopate carries on a tradition which links the unity of the Church to the unity of the human race. Christ is not only the true all-knowing prophet, but also the primal man, who, to reveal the truth, appeared again and again in the patriarchs and in Moses. So now, when he finally appeared, he appointed the twelve apostles to proclaim his words, and his brother James to be bishop of Jerusalem; and James, because of his blood-relationship to the Lord, has the privilege granted to him, that all teachers must be accredited by him. The doctrine of the true prophet, propagated through James and the apostles, is so truly the indwelling principle of the world's development, that Peter, as its representative against Simon Magus, is reckoned, together with Simon, among the syzygies which were predetermined in the world from the beginning. Therefore the bishop, whose ordination makes him a depositary of the true doctrine,

[1] Rothe, *op. cit.* p. 477.

is for his congregation the representative of God and Christ, and on them comes all honour or dishonour done to the bishop. He is thus in his sphere the organ of the one truth. These qualities were attributed to the episcopate by Peter, when he ordained Zacchaeus bishop of Caesarea.[1] In the Homilies the principles of the system are thus further unfolded;[2]—The Church is compared to a ship in a vehement storm, carrying men from the most various countries, whose master is God, whose pilot is Christ, whose chief oarsman is the bishop, whose passengers are the great body of Christians, and which at last arrives at the wished-for haven of eternal blessedness. It is then necessary above all things that the Church should have a well-ordered constitution. This she cannot have, unless she is ruled by a single ruler; for the cause of the number of wars lies in the number of kings; if there were only one ruler, there would be everlasting peace on earth. Therefore God has appointed one, namely, Christ, to rule over those who are deemed worthy of eternal life. But though Christ is thus the Lord of the Church, it is also necessary that his place be visibly filled; and this is done by the bishop. The bishop takes the place of Christ (*Χριστοῦ τόπον πεπίστευται*): he that offends against him sins against Christ: honour done to him is done to Christ: he has power to bind and to loose. Salvation depends on being connected with him: through him the individual Christian is led to Christ, and from Christ to God: he therefore that shows obedience to the bishop will attain salvation; he that does not, will be punished by God. The duty of the bishop, on the other hand, is to issue no tyrannical commands, like the princes of the Gentiles, but like a father to protect the injured, like a physician to visit the sick, like a shepherd to guard the flock—in a word, to care for the salvation of all. He must not engage in earthly occupations, which belong to the laity; but his whole care must be directed to heavenly things. He has to watch over the welfare

[1] Recogn. iii. 61. Hom. iii. 60.

[2] Ep. of Clement to James, cap. 14. Hom. iii. 62 *sq.*

of all, and the preservation of pure doctrine is his peculiar and especial charge. The presbyters follow after the bishop, the deacons after the presbyters; and the centre of the whole community is the bishop of Jerusalem, as the supreme bishop, ἐπίσκοπος ἐπισκόπων. To this bishop the charge of doctrine in the whole Church especially belongs, and Peter himself has continually to give an account of his work to him.

If we compare the episcopal idea here unfolded with the form which the constitution of the Christian congregations bears in the Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, we shall find the one sufficiently remote from the other. In the circumstances of the Church, as they appear at that early stage, there is no place for a bishop in the sense of the pseudo-Clement and the pseudo-Ignatius; and so entirely is the episcopal idea absent, that even Christ is not called ἐπίσκοπος, but only προστάτης (cap. 58). But now the idea corresponds to a want of the age, we see the interest which it excited from the emphasis with which the idea, and the whole system of ecclesiastical constitution connected with it, are insisted upon. Two things are especially noteworthy—the fact that the two main tendencies of Christendom, otherwise so distinct, coincide in this point; and the peculiar phenomenon that the writings which labour to carry out the common purpose are pseudonymous. We can see clearly with how deliberate a design, and under how real a need, the path prescribed by the circumstances of the time was followed out. In this pseudonymous literature a peculiar part is played by the same Clement of Rome, to whom, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, the idea of the episcopate is still so strange. As the apostle Peter is the ἀπαρχὴ of the Lord, and the first of the apostles, Clement is the ἀπαρχὴ τῶν σωζομένων ἐθνῶν, the first of the Gentiles converted by Peter the apostle of the Gentiles.[1] As such, and as the constant companion of the apostle in his missionary journeys, as his most intimate disciple, who had heard all his discourses, and had been instructed by him in the administration of the Church, he is

[1] Ep. Clem. ad Jac. i. 3.

ordained by Peter to be bishop of Rome, and appointed to succeed him in the government of the Christian Church, which, by the missionary activity of the apostle, is extending itself over the Gentile world. All that serves towards the government of the Church is deposited in him: his person supports the whole fabric of ecclesiastical legislation: his name is prefixed to a whole class of writings referring to the same subject. What are we to infer from this but that the constitution of the Christian Church, based on the idea of the episcopate, was of Jewish-Christian origin?[1] While the Jewish-Christians thoroughly approved of the continued expansion of the Christian Church by the conversion of the Gentiles, they were at the same time keenly bent on maintaining its original Jewish-Christian character, by giving it a constitution built on the idea of theocracy and the principle of strict all-pervading unity. Such at least is the clearly pronounced tendency of the pseudo-Clementine writings. Gentile Christianity, as the work of Paul, had no legitimate existence, so long as it lacked the Jewish-Christian imprimatur; and this it first received when Peter was set in the place of Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles. Similarly, the whole constitution of the Church was to be conceived as resting on the authority of Peter and the original congregation of Jerusalem. Only in proportion as the Christian Church holds fast to this original uniting principle is it possible for it—according to the monarchical view on which the pseudo-Clementine books are based—to be preserved in its purity, and to be kept free from all the impure pagan influences that endanger its unity. Although these writings, especially the Homilies, bear the colour of one particular party, still their utterances concerning the constitution of the Church can by no means be taken to proceed from mere partisanship. For the episcopal idea so emphatically asserted in them is the

[1] On the Jewish-Christian origin of the Apostolic Constitutions, and on the position of Clement as the intermediate agent through whom, according to tradition, the Gentile Christians receive the apostolic ordinances destined for them, see my Essay on the Origin of the Episcopate, p. 126 *sq.*; Schwegler, Nachap. Zeit. i. p. 406 *sq.*; Hilgenfeld, Die apost. Väter, p. 302 *sq.*

same which was historically realised in the Catholic Church. The especial support which the party represented in these compositions gave to the Episcopal idea can therefore only show that the constitution of the Catholic Church, based on episcopacy, was of Judaistic origin. The same endeavour after unity is inherent in the original character of Judaism. Or may we not say that it is the same tendency which meets us in Hegesippus, and even in the false apostles, with whom Paul came into hostile contact in so many ways—the tendency to keep ever in view the bond of connection with the original congregation, and to keep a watch over the whole Christian community in the interest of unity and right belief? This tendency after unity is at the same time everywhere an anti-Pauline tendency: this side appears most strongly in the Homilies. In the Pastoral Epistles, on the other hand, and still more in the Epistles of Ignatius, we see Paulinism filled and penetrated by a similar desire for unity. It is this which makes the pseudo-Ignatius, as contrasted with the pseudo-Clement, peculiarly remarkable. A Paulinist, he contends on behalf of the same wants and wishes, whose chief representative is the Petrine pseudo-Clement.[1] The realisation of the episcopal idea was felt to be a need arising out of the circumstances of the age. And so urgent had this need become, that even the Paulinists could now no longer delay to recognise it; only they did not wish to adopt the idea as represented by the Petrine name. For the Jewish Christians, as well as for the Roman Christians, who united Jerusalem and Rome in the person of Clement, Jerusalem was the head and source of all. The Paulinists, on the other hand, turned their eyes back to Antioch, the first seat of Pauline Christianity—where, as the Acts is careful to mention, xi. 26, the disciples were first called Christians in distinction from the Jews—and set up

[1] The author of the Epistles lives in the same idea of unity which possesses the monarchical mind of the author of the Homilies. In the Epistle to the Philad. cap. 8, Ignatius even calls himself a man organised for unity, *ἄνθρωπος εἰς ἕνωσιν κατηρτισμένος*; immediately above, cap. 7, he has cried out *τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ προσέχετε καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ καὶ διακόνοις—χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε —τὴν ἕνωσιν ἀγαπᾶτε*, etc.

against the Petrine Clement the hero of the Jewish Christian tradition, the bishop Ignatius, also one of the personages of the apostolic age. In the bonds of his captivity, in his journey from the East to the West under the escort of Roman soldiers, and in his martyrdom at Rome, the figure of the apostle Paul was to be called up anew before men's minds for the sake of the objects now deemed desirable.[1] In any case, the same fiction is the origin both of the pseudo-Ignatius and of the pseudo-Clement; and we may hence see how completely consistent it was with the spirit of the time, to use such names and such means as have been described in order to introduce principles, institutions, and ideas which had become practically needful.

The highest idea of the episcopate, and the one in which the pseudo-Clement and the pseudo-Ignatius most thoroughly agree, is that of the bishop as the vicar of God and Christ. Now on what does this idea rest, and by what considerations is it sustained? The Homilies merely affirm it, when they say of the bishop, iii. 66, that ὁ προκαθεζόμενος Χριστοῦ τόπον πεπίστευται; and the same is the case when in the Epistles, Magn. cap. 6, the ἐπίσκοπος is called εἰς τόπον Θεοῦ προκαθήμενος. Nor are we brought any further by the words, Eph. cap. 3: Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the will of the Father, as the bishops stationed in various places, οἱ κατὰ τὰ πέρατα ὁρισθέντες, are the will of God, and therefore we must follow the will of the bishop. The same substantial unity which exists between Christ and God is also described as the relation of the bishops to Christ. As then Christ is the personalised will of God, so the bishops are the personalised will of Christ. Such a doctrine rests entirely on the supposition that the idea of unity with Christ necessarily requires it; but since the bishops are in the first instance merely the successors of the apostles, it is in itself a bold transition to see

[1] Cf. my Essay on the Episcopate, p. 179 *sq.* The author of the Epistles exhibits his Paulinism most distinctly in Ephes. 12, where he calls himself a successor of the apostle who was so highly to be extolled on account of his martyrdom. In the Apostolic Constitutions, vii. 46, the apostle Peter is made to say that Evodius had been appointed bishop at Antioch by him, Ignatius by Paul.

directly in the bishop the representative of God and Christ. And if it is their chief task to maintain the unity of the Church in purity of doctrine, and to ward off heresies and schisms, whence have they the doctrine which they are to preserve, if not from the hands of the apostles? It is accordingly noteworthy that the idea—viz., that of the bishop as the vicar of God and Christ—which the pseudonymous books state without showing the links of connection between Christ and the bishops, was not strictly adhered to by the succeeding doctors of the Church. They, on the contrary, brought those connecting links into especial prominence. With Irenaeus and Tertullian the bishops are not the vicars of God and Christ, but only the successors of the apostles, those who uphold and carry on the doctrine delivered by them. Here is a further step in the development of the episcopal idea. Two distinct views are therefore to be distinguished.

The episcopal idea at first did not proceed from the contemplation of the Church in general, but merely grew out of the limited sphere of individual congregations. As long as only presbyters stood, as a plurality, at the head of each body, there seemed to be a lack of a unity fitted to knit and hold all together. Now, as Christ is for each single congregation that which he is for the Church as a whole, it was desired that the ideal unity which each congregation has in Christ should appear as a real unity. This was brought to pass when one man came to stand at the head of the body as the vicar of Christ. First of all, it was necessary to have a bishop as such holding such a representative position; then the unity of the Church might be contemplated as a whole, as shown forth in that which all the bishops were together. But in order that the bishops might show forth this unity, they again must have a real principle of unity in themselves. Such a principle could only be found in the doctrine which they upheld and handed on. By the unity of doctrine in which they all agreed, they were bound together into the real concrete unity of a closely-compacted whole. Now they had received this doctrine, not immediately from Christ, but only through the mediation of the apostles. Therefore, as soon

as the bishops, instead of being merely the points of union for individual congregations, became the representatives of the unity of the Church in general, they could not be conceived as vicars of Christ, but only as successors of the apostles. The transition is already observable in the Homilies, where, though the bishop is the vicar of Christ, he is at the same time the guardian of the truth transmitted by the apostles.[1] The truth delivered by the apostles must be preserved; and therefore, according to the Homilies, the office of bishop is instituted by the apostles, though it is Peter alone who, wherever he founds congregations, also instituted bishops. With the series of doctors that begins with Irenaeus, apostolic succession forms the chief part of the idea of the episcopal office. According to Irenaeus and Tertullian it is the essential function of the bishops to maintain apostolic tradition, and to stand, in the chain of tradition, as links between the past and the future. By their agreement in one and the same doctrine they show forth the unity of the Church. In order therefore to arrive at the principle of unity of doctrine we have only to trace out the episcopal succession.[2] Cyprian, the chief representative of the episcopal and ecclesiastical sentiment of his age, is still more fully possessed by the idea that unity is embodied and manifested in the episcopate. The Church and the episcopate are to him the same unity. It is the Holy Spirit imparted to the bishops, rather than apostolic succession, that is the principle of the episcopate. The body has its principle of unity in this Spirit; there can be no difference of opinion among those in whom

[1] He is the *προκαθεζόμενος τῆς ἀληθείας*, the *πρεσβύτης τῆς ἀληθείας*. Ep. Clem. ad Jac. cap. 2, 6, 17.

[2] The chief passage is in Irenaeus: Adv. Haer. iv. 33: *Γνῶσις ἀληθὴς ἡ τῶν ἀποστόλων διδαχὴ καὶ τὸ ἀρχαῖον τῆς ἐκκλησίας σύστημα κατὰ παντὸς τοῦ κόσμου* et character corporis Christi secundum successionis episcoporum quibus illi eam, quae in unoquoque loco est, ecclesiam tradiderunt. On this passage, cf. Rothe, "By reason of the transmission of correct doctrine, the episcopal office is held by Irenaeus to be a continuation of the apostolic office, ordained by the apostles themselves; the Church therefore consists in the collective number of such bishops of single congregations as agree with apostolic doctrine." See above, p. 14.

is one and the same spirit.[1] The one Spirit individualises himself in the different bishops. Each bishop is only that which every other is; in the unity of the episcopate they are altogether one; they have solidarity together as a whole, in which none stands alone, but each individual exhibits in himself the unity and totality of the whole.[2] If the bishops are what they are, not as individuals, but only as they thus stand for an aggregate, then no one is either more or less than the rest are: no one may command or take commands from another: each one may consider himself a representative of the aggregate, but may not assume any such position as that of an episcopus episcoporum. With Cyprian, however, the need and desire for unity, which are natural to the episcopate, acquire a new significance; for with him a certain definite point is supposed to be the source of the unity shown forth by the collective number of the bishops. Though the other apostles were also what Peter was, equal associates in honour and power, still the beginning proceeds from unity, in order that the Church of Christ may appear as one; to Peter, in the first place, the Lord gave the "potestas, unde unitatis originem instituit et ostendit."[3] With Cyprian, the high pre-eminence which Irenaeus and Tertullian allow only to the Roman Church, on account of its foundation by the two most glorious apostles, passes to the Roman bishop. The Roman Church, as the cathedra Petri, is the "ecclesia principalis unde unitas sacerdotalis exorta est." If such ideas were accepted, it followed that each of those who, as successors of Peter in the Roman Church, sat in the same cathedra, must likewise be regarded as a centre and a uniting point for Christendom; and this conviction very soon found utterance in the bishops of Rome.[4] The premises from which the

[1] Ep. 73. 68 (66).

[2] Ep. 52. Cum sit a Christo una ecclesia per totum mundum in multa membra divisa, item episcopatus unus multorum concordi numerositate diffusus. De Unit. Eccles. cap. 5: Episcopatus unus est, cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur.

[3] De Unit. Eccles. cap. 4; Ep. 73 (72).

[4] Even Bishop Firmilian of Cappadocia mentions in a letter to Cyprian (in the Epistles of Cyprian, Ep. 75 (74), that the Roman bishop Stephanus "sic de episcopatus sui loco gloriatur et se successionem Petri tenere contendit."

Papacy was a consistent conclusion are already given. If Peter was the first bishop of Rome, the Roman bishops must be his successors, and accordingly must have the same primacy as he had. Peter was made bishop of Rome because he was believed to have visited Rome; and he was supposed to have been once in Rome, because it was impossible, especially as Paul had been there, that the first of the apostles had not also been in the capital of the world. It is the political importance of the city of Rome which gives the first occasion to the legend of Peter. And, as the Papacy itself is founded on this legend, the origin of the Papacy is to be sought simply in the fact that the importance possessed by Rome as the capital of the world, settled upon the bishop of the Roman church.[1] True, another cause was requisite, viz., that there should be one who was chief among the apostles. But this circumstance, by itself, would not have had a decisive influence; for the primacy ascribed to Peter was not exclusive, nor was it believed that the words of Christ were to be taken in this sense. It was only in Rome that bishops, who claimed to be the successors of the apostle Peter in his primacy, could also maintain the actual primacy of the Church.

Cyprian, bishop of Carthage (till the year 258), and his contemporaries the bishops of Rome, Cornelius and Stephanus, furnish the best standard for determining the relation which the Roman

[1] Both the political and the apostolic character of the city of Rome are referred to in the well-known passage of Irenaeus, iii. 3. 2, and in the potentior principalitas there enunciated respecting the Roman church. This church, as the congregation of the capital, is the ecclesia maxima. The passage so variously explained: "ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiorem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est, eos, qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper ab his, qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quae est ab apostolis traditio" will be most correctly understood, as it appears to me, if we take the first part to express that which, from the nature of the matter, cannot be otherwise; the second, that which actually is so. "For every church must guide itself according to this church, by reason of the pre-eminent importance of Rome, as capital and as apostolic church; for believers come from every quarter to Rome, and thus the apostolic tradition has been maintained both in the Roman church and the church in general through those who, in all quarters, stand in connection with Rome."

church, already recognised as the cathedra Petri, bore to the Christian Church at the period about the end of the third and beginning of the fourth century. In the controversy concerning heretical baptism, the higher Stephanus's pretensions rose, the more emphatically did Cyprian and Firmilian assert against him the independence of the churches of Africa and Asia Minor. With regard to the subject of the controversy, it may appear a strange contradiction that it should be the Roman bishop who seemed to sacrifice the interests of unity to the validity of heretical baptism, and Stephanus's opponents were right enough in taking such advantage as this contradiction gave them.[1] But it is not merely devotion to unity that characterises the Roman Church; together with this, it exhibits the truly Catholic aspiration, to open the arms of the one saving Church as widely as possible to all that are capable of being received. Only from this point of view could Stephanus lower the objective nature of the sacrament to such a material idea as to declare the mere laying-on of hands to be sufficient in the case of all who had been once baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus,[2] and to regard the defenders of the one baptism in the one only true Church as Rebaptists.[3]

If we look back upon the circumstances that first occasioned and promoted the development and realisation of the episcopal

[1] Firmilian argues, *loc. cit.*, that the greater his pride in his episcopal see, the more preposterous it is that by the side of Peter, "super quem fundamenta ecclesiae collocata sunt, multas alias petras inducat."

[2] Cf. Cyprian, Ep. 74 (73). Si effectum baptismi majestati nominis tribuunt, ut qui in nomine Jesu Christi ubicunque et quomodocunque baptizantur, innovati et sanctificati judicentur, cur eadem majestas nominis non prevalet in manus impositione? How can those "filii Dei esse, qui non sint in ecclesia nati," heretics like the Marcionites and Valentinians?

[3] Eusebius, E. H. vii. 5. When it is said, Philos. ix. 12, p. 291, that no one ventured to practise the δεύτερον βάπτισμα till the time of the Roman bishop Callistus, this is not to be understood, as Döllinger supposes (Hippol. and Callistus, p. 189 *sq.*), of heretical baptism, but of the baptism of the Elcesaite Alcibiades at Rome, Philos. p. 294. Stephanus was no doubt justified in appealing to the tradition of his church for the mere laying-on of hands; nothing had yet been dogmatically determined on the point. Nor did Cyprian contradict him here; only humana traditio was not to weigh more than divina dispositio, consuetudo not more than veritas.

idea, we find that it was unquestionably through the episcopate that the Christian Church first reached the consciousness of its unity as founded on belief in Christ. With this consciousness it acquired the power of a Catholic Church able to overcome all heresies and schisms, to advance beyond every kind of particularism, to cut off from itself all that was extreme, and to unite all allied elements; and through that strength it was able to establish itself as a permanent fact. But what did it avail that there existed a Church cast into this determinate form and organised for future existence, if that Church had no future before it, and was not to look forward to any development at all; if, believing in the immediate coming of Christ, it every moment expected the end of all things? Here we are brought back to Montanism. It was Montanism which maintained in the Church, in full vividness and energy, the thought of the catastrophe that impended in the immediate future, and thus, even on the very threshold of the Church's existence, placed its end before its eyes. On the other hand, it was the episcopate that, in opposition to Montanism, first made the existence and development of a Christian Church possible.

The controversy between the Montanists and their opponents points to a question with regard to which the Christian consciousness of this age was very much divided in itself. The opponents of Montanism saw in its moral requirements a doctrine of impracticable rigour. Nor in fact did they share the opinion that the end of the world was already so near, and that the most urgent duty of the time was to break with the world and to hold one's-self prepared for the great catastrophe. Since the belief in the immediate coming of Christ had not yet found its fulfilment, they drew the natural conclusion that it would probably remain unfulfilled in the next following period as well: that the end of the world was not yet so near as the Montanists supposed. But as the unnatural strain of mind, caused by the constant expectation of Christ's coming, was abated, the change inevitably influenced the whole practical demeanour of Christians. It was no longer possible to stand in an attitude of such sharp antagonism to the

world in which one lived; one was forced more and more to accommodate one's-self to the world. Now, since Montanism could see here only a secularising of Christianity, we must consider Montanism itself to have been a reaction against this tendency. When, in the eyes of the Montanist party, the customs of the day seemed to be growing too lax, they increased proportionably the strictness of practice in the Christian life by moral requirements, which they either now put forward for the first time, or affirmed to have a long-established validity. Such an opposition of opinions and parties having once arisen, the inevitable conflict could only acquire fresh vehemence with the increased frequency of cases where the Christian character was in a glaring way denied. What was the proper policy for such cases? The real essence of the question, however, did not lie in the doubtful point, whether those who were in this predicament were still to be recognised as Christians; but in this—could they be received back into the society of the Church through a forgiveness of sins to be granted through the power of the keys? On this point the general difference that separated the Montanists from the Catholic Church assumed the shape of an immediately practical question. In every case of commission of a so-called deadly sin, the Montanists utterly refused forgiveness, because such a sin, as committed against God himself, could only be forgiven by God, or, since God is the Spirit, by the Church, in so far as it is the Spirit; but the Church, in the new prophets, or through the Paraclete, had forbidden forgiveness. Their opponents, on the other hand, not only put forward the principle that even deadly sins could be forgiven, but ascribed to themselves the authority to forgive them.[1]

The question thus controverted belongs, in the first instance, to dogma. But its importance for the history of the ecclesiastical constitution which was now growing into shape on the framework of the episcopate arises from the fact that the opponents who most prominently confronted the Montanists and their prophets, as the

[1] Tert. de Pudic. cap. 21.

organs of the Paraclete, were the bishops. It is very probable that in Asia Minor the movement against them was from the first headed by the bishops. The chief datum, however, from which we may infer the attitude of the bishops towards the Montanist question is the important fact, attested by Tertullian, that the bishop of Rome had openly declared that none of the sins, termed by the Montanists the deadly sins of adultery and fornication, were any more to operate an absolute exclusion from the communion of the Church; persons guilty of such sins were to receive forgiveness after performance of penance.[1] Though Tertullian speaks in an ironical tone of this peremptory (*i.e.* putting an end to the controversy) edict, which the bishop of Rome, he says, issued as a pontifex maximus or episcopus episcoporum,[2] it must have had a very decisive influence in bringing about the termination of the controversy. Hitherto the bishops of Rome had not declared themselves decidedly against the Montanists; and at the time of the arrival of Praxeas at Rome, probably under Eleutherus, they were even on the point of joining Christian communion with them. It was therefore an important event when, by the edict mentioned by Tertullian, the bishop (Victor, 190-200, or Zephyrinus, 200-15) put an end to all doubt concerning the attitude of the Roman church. So little sympathy was there in Rome with the moral principles of the Montanists. But Tertullian himself gives us to understand that the bishop of Rome did not here stand alone, but that it was the common episcopal interest which guided him; for he opposes to his Montanist assertion that the

[1] Ego, Tertullian reports the bishop to say in his edict, et moechiae et fornicationis delicta poenitentia functis dimitto.

[2] Gieseler, K.-G. i. 1, p. 288 (without any grounds, and in contradiction to the whole historical connection of Montanism), will have it that the bishop of Carthage is meant. The very fact that the appellations used do not imply a real, but only an arrogated dignity, exactly suits the bishop of Rome. And if Tertullian (according to Jerome, Catal. 53) stood on no good terms with the Roman clergy even before he became a Montanist, the irony of the expression is all the better explained. The Philosophoumena, ix. 12, p. 290, give some fresh information as to the practice with respect to forgiveness of sins, which was introduced into Rome under Zephyrinus, probably the bishop referred to by Tertullian.

ecclesia is "spiritus per spiritalem hominem," the antithesis "non ecclesia numerus episcoporum." However many bishops put forth the anti-Montanist principle that the Church can forgive such sins, still only the judgment of the Spirit, as it speaks in a spiritual man, can be decisive on such a question.

The needs and requirements which determined the action of the bishops may be discovered from those which influenced the Montanists; the two sets of motives are exactly contrary. The latter simply refused the forgiveness of mortal sins in order that, in view of the approaching end of the world, they might draw the reins of ecclesiastical discipline as tight as possible; and they wished the more to tighten them now that a large part of the Christian Church had so greatly relaxed them. The bishops, on the other hand, must, in accordance with their view of the world, have been of opinion that it might still be expedient to make arrangements for a more prolonged existence of the Church in the world. It was precisely at this time that the Church first acquired, in the episcopate, an organisation calculated for permanence; and the idea of a continua successio, apprehended with such fulness of meaning by the bishops, could not fail, while it bade them look back to the apostles, whose successors they claimed to be, to direct their contemplation to the future of the Church as well. If the bishops considered themselves as the officials of a church that was not to vanish forthwith from the world, but to continue to subsist in it, they must naturally have felt impelled to separate from the Christian society whatever might bring to mind the over-strained transcendentalism of the Christian consciousness at the outset of Christianity, and the sharp opposition to the world in which it had consequently stood, as such elements might too easily become the means of diverting the Church from the path in which she was to take her regular course in the world. The Church could not subsist in the world without contracting a more solid friendship with it than was possible, while it every moment expected the world's destruction. We need but imagine in what a peculiarly strained state of mind those must have lived, who, ever thinking on the

coming of Christ and the accompanying catastrophe, hovered as it were between existence and non-existence. How could a society of believers such as these plant its foot firmly in the world, while it saw the ground of its existence ever heaving beneath it, and the world's whole order collapsing in the immediate future? Again when, in accordance with the same belief, moral requirements were heightened to a degree that surpassed the common measure of human strength, here was another point of view in which the Church fell short of the conditions of a state of existence adapted to the present material order of things. What an exaggerated demand was made by the Montanists upon all the members of the Christian society—that they should remain absolutely free from all the transgressions which they included under the name of mortal sins! This was rigour so impracticable, that a society professedly governed by such a principle must soon see the moral force necessary for its subsistence consume itself in the internal struggle. The concession made with regard to the forgiveness of deadly sins was the first step that tended to harmonise a transcendental and never-to-be-realised idea with those actual facts which alone could afford a basis for the development of the idea into a permanent Church. If it was impossible that sins should completely disappear, it must at least be possible that they should be forgiven. The pure ideality of the Church was thus lost, but the idea of the Church became practical. The Christian body consisted, if not solely of saints completely untainted by any so-called deadly sin, at any rate of those whom the Church, by virtue of her power of the keys, could recognise as true members of the society. And if, as even the Montanists assumed, the Church had the right to forgive sins, why should it not make use of that right? Thus the bishops, when they came forward and placed themselves prominently at the head of the anti-Montanist party, in the question as to the lawfulness of forgiving deadly sins, proved in a way very characteristic of their position, that in them the Christian spirit had recovered from that over-strained mood of its early years, in which it had been

hardly self-possessed,—nay, almost beside itself. It was this policy of theirs which first made it possible that a Christian Church, following in its development the thread of the episcopal continua successio, should actually exist. The fact that among all the bishops it was the bishop of Rome whose authority had the most decisive influence calls us to notice how even at this early time the Roman bishops were entering on the road in which they afterwards understood only too well, both in theory and practice, how to guide the Church and the world hand in hand. The tendency to conform Christianity to the world, afterwards carried in the Roman Church to the utmost possible limits, is seen here in its first commencement, in a form quite innocent, and fully justified by the nature of the case in hand. In a word, we have a programme of indulgences for sins which the Montanist could only style delicta moechiæ et fornicationis. Here we see the first step of that long and notorious history of the Roman grants of indulgences. Even at this time Tertullian, as if he had correctly divined the whole historical significance of the edict of the episcopus episcoporum, calls a terrenum Dei templum, in which the sponsa Christi, the vera, pudica, sancta virgo, is compelled to suffer even as a macula aurium, a liberalitas that should rather stand before the januae libidinum, a spelunca moechorum et fornicatorum.[1]

The possibility of forgiveness of sins within the Church was, as the edict of the Roman bishop shows, declared as a principle;

[1] In tracing the relation of the Roman Church to Montanism back beyond the time of Tertullian, an important document is (as Ritschl first showed in detail, 1st ed. p. 546 *sq.*, 2d ed. p. 529 *sq.*), the Shepherd of Hermas. The chief theme of the Shepherd is the question of forgiveness of sins after baptism. A second repentance after baptism is permitted, but only within a certain limited period of time, only usque in hodiernum diem, until the praefinita dies. Poenitentiae enim justorum habent fines. Impleti sunt dies poenitentiae omnibus sanctis, gentibus autem (*i.e.* those not yet baptized) usque in novissimo die. The limit is more precisely determined by the figure of the building of the tower, under which the Church is represented. Penance may be done dum aedificatur turris. Nam si consummata fuerit structura, jam quis non habet locum, ubi ponatur, erit reprobus. The tower will soon be finished (turris cito consummabitur, Vis. 3, 8). The time allowed for the second repentance is thus only the time during

an important step was taken, that of guiding the Church into a path in which its continuous realisation was not to be hindered by the sinful nature of its members. It may now be shown, step by step, how the Church abandoned, or adopted only with essential modifications, all that in Montanism had asserted itself with fresh energy as the original form of the Christian consciousness. The whole movement is intimately connected with the crisis in the mind of the age which arrived at a decision by the aid of the episcopate.

The extremitates temporum, the angustiae of the καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος, which lay heavy on the heart of Tertullian, and produced in him so gloomy a frame of mind, are not spoken of by Cyprian, though his mode of thought is exclusively founded on that of Tertullian. Though convinced that the world will not endure much longer, Cyprian sees in this fact only the general

which the tower is being built, till the second coming of Christ, which is immediately at hand (Sim. ix. 7-10). The completion of the building marks, as Ritschl successfully shows, that epoch of the Church which was to be fixed by the appearance of Montanism. Montanism, however, conceived this point of time as so near, that the idea of the possibility of a second repentance did not arise. The Church therefore appears to Hermas in the first vision in the form of an aged woman, and blames him for a secret concupiscence, and for devotion to worldly business; in the second vision she appears with youthful aspect, but grey hair; in the third young and joyous. Since it is in these last two visions that she makes the disclosures concerning the cessation of the second penance, it is plain that the revived youth of the Church and the renewal of the Spirit are supposed to be caused by that abolition of the second penance which is intended to counteract the increasing conformity of the Church to the world as delineated in the first vision. Ritschl shows further that the Shepherd of Hermas also assumes an attitude of opposition to the clergy, while the clergy justify with their authority this conformity to the world and the repetition of penance; and that the antithesis between the Shepherd and the clergy is the same as that between the Montanists and the Psychici. The Roman Church, then, about the middle of the second century, the time of Hermas, was stirred, quite independently of Montanism, by the same question which in the latter came to its sharpest expression. "Hermas marks a local prelude of the phenomena which, beginning from Phrygia, threw almost all parts of the Church into excitement and disorder. He opens the series of the separations which fill the next century, and during that time occupy the Roman Church incessantly. Between the Montanist movement in Rome and the Novatian schism stands the secession of Hippolytus, at the beginning of the third century." Ritschl, p. 538.

truth that the world is now aged, and has lost the freshness of its strength,—a truth that bears no relation to the immediate coming of Christ, nor in fact to Christianity.[1] In proportion as Christians came over to the standpoint of the secular mind on this subject, the strictness of the practical requirements which had been deduced from the original exaggerated theory was relaxed. With Tertullian castrare desideria carnis was a categorical command of the Paraclete, and a transgression of the command could only be regarded as a deadly sin. With the more moderate Cyprian, the same requirement is merely presented to the moral consciousness of the Christian in the form of recommendation and advice. If he follows it, it is a meritorious act, and he acquires a claim to a higher reward; but though he refuses to comply, his moral perfection in other respects is not thereby compromised. But it is especially with reference to millenarianism that we see the relinquishment of the fanatical tendency which had so highly excited the Montanist imagination. The antipathy to this doctrine became more and more general; indeed, there was now felt an active desire to combat it, and to deny the principle of its existence; and it is characteristic of the present turning-point of Christian development that this was the case not only in the Alexandrian Church, which was always an opponent of millenarianism, but also, and chiefly, in the Church of Rome, and that about the time at which the same Church completely broke with Montanism. The Roman presbyter Caius, one of the chief representatives of the new tendency, though he did not go so far as to declare the Apocalypse of John to be the work of the heretic Cerinthus, yet all the more energetically combated in Cerinthus the material millenarian belief of Judaism.[2] Millenarianism now stood for what had been left behind in the advance that had been made from Judaism, and all that pertained to it, to Christianity. In this view, with the disappearance of the circumstances which had once given a particular belief its hold on men's minds, the

[1] Ad Demetrianum, c. 3, ed. Krabinger, Tüb. 1859, p. 156.
[2] Eusebius, iii. 28, cf. Theol. Jahrb. 1853, p. 157 *sq.*

belief itself was necessarily to be relinquished. On the other hand, other parts of the same system were to be preserved though in a changed form. The moral and ascetic requirements of the Montanists were not given up, but merely adapted to the Catholic Church; and still less could their principle of revelation, the Holy Spirit, be regarded as belonging exclusively to them. Each side alike presupposed that the Spirit and the Church are essentially connected, that the Church has its true essence in the Spirit, and the Spirit has its real existence in the Church: the great offence felt by the Catholic party arose from the vague, arbitrary, fortuitous nature of Montanist prophecy, from its tendency to introduce novelty, to set up a new principle of faith in the separate individuals whom it made its organs. In this sense it was said to be an instance of the folly of the Montanists that they should wish to assert their own theory as Catholic; and their doctrine was affirmed to lead to a consequence which marked it as heresy, namely, that if they believed themselves to be the first who received the Paraclete promised by Christ, they thereby denied the possession of the Paraclete to the apostles.[1] It thus came about quite consistently with the attitude of the Catholic Church towards Montanism that the working of the Holy Spirit, who in the Montanist Paraclete moved in the free scope of the subjectivity of separate individuals endowed with the gift of prophecy, was now fixed and regulated in accordance with Catholic ideas. As the keys of the power to bind and to loose, claimed by the Montanist prophets for themselves, came into the hands of the bishops exclusively, so the bishops were now the sole acknowledged organs of the Holy Spirit. The principle of individuality, on which Montanist prophecy rested, was now opposed by the maxim that the Holy Spirit, as the governing principle in the Church, spoke only in the collective number of the Church's representatives, and that the latter might the more surely believe themselves to be inspired by him, the firmer and clearer was their consciousness that they represented the Church. Thus the

[1] Schwegler, Mont. p. 225, 238.

influence, for whose operation the Montanist revelations offered such an irregular and uncertain course, was made to adopt the ordered and regular movement of councils representing the Church. The continuity with the Spirit that worked in the apostles, which in the Paraclete of the Montanists seemed such a weak and easily dissoluble bond, was firmly established by the dogma that the resolutions of councils do but proclaim to the general consciousness the principles of an apostolic tradition ever immanent in the Church. Under this form of the revelation of the Spirit the ecstasy peculiar to Montanist prophecy was necessarily excluded. Only the individual mind can, through the operation of the Spirit, fall in ecstasy into such a state of transport as to lose control over itself. If the Spirit speaks in the collective mind of many separate beings, it is inconceivable that the common product, which is to be taken as the Spirit's utterance, can be arrived at in any other way than through common deliberation, guided by reflection. According to Tertullian, the individual, when seized by the Spirit, is necessarily thrown into a state of transport. He therefore does not hesitate to place the essence of prophecy precisely in the loss of conscious control over the mind, or amentia.[1] Now prophecy has its only basis in the relation which the individual privately bears to the Spirit, when, unable to be other than passive under him, he must allow the Spirit so to work in him that he is carried away from his centre of consciousness and brought into a state of transport. It follows naturally that the relation of the Spirit to the mind of a multitude of individuals, as that relation is shown in the bishops assembled in councils, cannot bear the same external and fortuitous character. The more the inadequacy of man to the Spirit is removed in the infinitely enlarged number of inspired persons, the more it becomes necessary to conceive the Spirit as the substantial principle dwelling in the collective number of those persons. It therefore resulted from the nature of the case that there was no longer any place for the ecstatic prophecy of the Mon-

[1] De Anima, cap. 11.

tanists when the organs of the Spirit were taken to be, not individuals in their fortuitous subjectivity, but the bishops in the regular form of the representation of the Church. Here was another point in which the opposition of the episcopate to Montanism marked the change from the unsettled condition of the earliest Christians to the firm and ordered subsistence of the Catholic Church. If we go further back, we must hold the true and ultimate cause of ecstatic Montanist prophecy to have been the old transcendental view of the world—the peculiar form of consciousness natural to the early Christians, so long as, in their belief in the nearness of Christ's coming, they stood with one foot in the present, and the other in the future world. This was no sober self-possessed state of mind; rather, the mind was transported beyond itself: ecstasy was its characteristic form. There can therefore be no more plainly distinctive mark of the crisis which now everywhere followed, than the definite declaration that ecstasy suits neither the prophetic spirit nor the Christian mind.[1] Henceforth it is an orthodox conception, that the prophets of the Old Testament did not prophesy in ecstasy, without control over their own minds, but in the full possession of their consciousness and understanding. Ecstasy is held to be an unworthy condition, characteristic of demonic heathenism, while the full self-possession of the inspired being is regarded as an essential determining idea of any theory of inspiration that professes to hold a Christian standpoint. The Christian mind has taken up a firm position in the existing world, and sees that in Christianity, as it gradually assumes the form of the Catholic Church, there is founded a newly-developing order of things; and accordingly, even in the presence of the operations of the Divine Spirit, it feels itself strong enough to keep its self-possession, and to hold firmly to its self-consciousness.[2]

[1] Among the opponents of the Montanists in Asia Minor, Miltiades wrote a book entitled Περὶ τοῦ μὴ δεῖν προφήτην ἐν ἐκστάσει λαλεῖν. Euseb. E. H. v. 17; Cf. Schwegler, p. 227.

[2] It is worthy of observation that even the pseudo-Clementine Homilies, though they give so high a place to prophecy, declare themselves against the

From what has been said, it is evident how important was the influence of the episcopate in the formation and development of the Church. Through the episcopate the Church acquired its detefminate form; it was in the bishops that men were first found, upon whom it could be conceived that the highest privileges conferred by Christ himself on his apostles had passed in all their fulness. What the Church as a whole was, in its essence and its peculiar principle, concentrated and showed forth itself in them. The Holy Spirit is for Christians in general the principle of their consciousness, the peculiar Spirit which animates them, and makes them ἅγιοι in the same manner in which Christ himself, as endued or anointed with the Holy Spirit, the principle of Messiahship, is simply the ἅγιος; the principle working in the Christian society, which, wherever the needs of Christianity require, intervenes with its divine power; and all this he is in the highest and most concentrated way in the bishops. They, of all others, are the depositaries and possessors of the Divine Spirit indwelling in the Church. As Christ, when he conferred his Spirit on his apostles, committed to them also full power to forgive sins, so in the bishops this right, as the highest power committed to the Church, accompanies the possession of the Spirit. By the successio apostolica and the vicaria ordinatio, the same potestas passes from the apostles to the bishops, and from one bishop to another. As Christ, when he gave the power to forgive sins, granted to the apostles the highest privilege that he could leave them, so with the power of the keys the episcopal office is invested with the highest attributes.[1] The Church first attains

admissibility of ecstasy in divine things. Influenced by the same motives which prompted the action of the Catholic Church, they regard ecstasy as incompatible alike with an ordered constitution of the Church, such as the episcopal system supplies, and with any high stage of the development of the Christian mind. They expressly oppose to ecstasy, with its demonic deception, the indwelling consciousness of the ἔμφυτον καὶ ἀέννaον πνεῦμα, which is not only in the prophets, but in all pious men. See *supra*, vol. i. p. 241.

[1] Compare Cyprian, Ep. 75 (74), where Bishop Firmilian, after citing the passage John xx. 21, says: Potestas ergo remittendorum peccatorum apostolis data est et ecclesiis quas illi a Christo missi constituerunt, et episcopis qui eis ordinatione

self-consciousness in the bishops; for in them its whole power concentrates itself, and finds a head and a living unity, and they are therefore the consciousness of the Church itself; and this consciousness must deliver itself in them in a determinate form. The conditions of this form are implied in the conception of the office. Though every bishop is the same as that which all the others are, yet he is that which he is, not when taken alone, but only when taken together with all the rest. Therefore the consciousness of the Church, represented by the bishops, cannot speak in any single bishop taken alone, but only in a larger or smaller number of assembled bishops. It was accordingly inevitable that from the very beginning of the episcopal constitution synods should be held. Whenever questions of common interest, requiring common action, happened to arise, it was felt to be reasonable to take counsel together and form resolutions, as was done first on occasion of the questions of Montanism and Easter; and it very soon became customary to hold meetings of this kind at regularly

vicaria successerunt. Here the original right of the churches is not yet quite forgotten, for the bishops only obtain the apostolic right through the churches founded by the apostles, which stand as connecting links between the latter and the bishops. With reference to the passage John xx. 21, those who regard the Gospel of John as post-apostolic will easily believe that its attitude towards this great question of the day was analogous to that it took up with regard to the question of Easter. In the application of the title Paraclete to the Holy Spirit, the Gospel agrees with the Montanists. The apostolic power to bind and to loose is taken to mean the right to forgive sins, in the same sense which was assigned to this power when the Montanists and their opponents disputed over it. It is also grounded on the Montanist fundamental principle (not mentioned either in Matt. xvi. 19 or Matt. xviii. 18), the *πνεῦμα ἅγιον*. Here too, as in the question of Easter, the Gospel placed itself on the side of that view which came to prevail as the catholic one. When it gives the words of Jesus, "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you," as containing the reason for the gift of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, it expresses both the idea of apostolic succession and the principle that there must always be successors of the apostles, invested with the like right to forgive sins. It is remarkable that John xx. 21 is cited by Cyprian and Firmilian, but not by Tertullian. Cyprian says, referring to the passage: "unde intelligimus, nonnisi in ecclesia praepositis et in evangelica lege ac dominica ordinatione fundatis licere baptizare et remissam peccatorum dare." It seemed to him, then, that what the Gospel here says of the apostles holds good of the bishops likewise, and of them alone. This Tertullian could not concede.

recurring periods. Such meetings, while they proceeded from the consciousness of the bishops as to the position which they held as members and officials of the Church, could not but serve to strengthen greatly in their minds the feeling that they belonged to a special order, and to give the synods the character of a universal ecclesiastical representation.[1] It is an essential quality of such a representation, that its importance increases with the number of its representing members. Accordingly, even before the episcopal constitution passed the step which led to metropolitan dignity, the synodal constitution had reached its immediate goal in the first general synod, which, as œcumenical, exhibited in itself the collective number of the bishops of the Roman Empire; and as each bishop was able to regard himself as a special organ of the Holy Spirit, and what was true of the individual must be still more indisputably true of a number of bishops, here, too, the principle which lay at the base of the ecclesiastical constitution reached its complete external manifestation in the œcumenical synods. According to the Acts, the assembly held by the apostles at Jerusalem issued its resolution in the name of the Holy Spirit; and if even provincial synods afterwards made use of the same formula,[2] it was still more natural to believe that in the collective number of the bishops assembled in an œcumenical council the will of God revealed itself, under the influence of the Holy Spirit.[3]

The system whose fundamental characteristics have been here set forth contains, even as it appears in those first beginnings

[1] Tert. de Jej. c. 13: Aguntur per Graecias illa certis in locis concilia ex universis ecclesiis, per quae et altiora quaeque in commune tractantur, et ipsa repraesentatio totius nominis christiani magna veneratione celebratur. Compare Cypr. Ep. 75 (74), where Firmilian says: Necessario apud nos fit, ut per singulos annos seniores et presbyteri in unum conveniamus ad disponenda ea, quae curae nostrae commissa sunt, ut, si qua graviora, communi consilio dirigantur.

[2] As the synod at Carthage under Cyprian in the year 252. See Cypr. Ep. 54: Placuit nobis, sancto spiritu suggerente.

[3] Cp. Socr. i. 9, where Constantine, in his letter to the church of Alexandria, says of the Nicene synod:—Ὁ γὰρ τοῖς τριακοσίοις ἤρεσεν ἐπισκόποις, οὐδέν ἐστιν ἕτερον ἢ τοῦ Θεοῦ γνώμη, μάλιστά γε ὅπου τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, τοιούτων καὶ τηλικούτων ἀνδρῶν ταῖς διανοίαις ἐγκειμένον, τὴν θείαν βούλησιν ἐξεφώτισεν.

which were the natural outgrowth of existing circumstances, the elements of a most comprehensive and thoroughgoing hierarchy. The greatness of its plan consists in the simplicity of the forms on which it is based. The fundamental form is the relation of the bishop to the congregation beneath him. However the system may develop, expand, or modify itself, this form always remains unaltered. The bishop of the smallest church, and the Pope at the highest stage of the Papacy, are in essence the same. At all stages of the hierarchy we find but a repetition of the same fundamental form, the chief peculiarity of which consists precisely in its capacity for a boundless expansion. Though qualitatively always the same, the episcopate yet admits of great quantitative variation; the relation of equality is also one of subordination, ascending upwards by a series of stages and intermediate members; and thus the episcopate becomes a form which not only extends over the widest field, but includes within itself the capacity of a very well-articulated organism. This element of difference in a system ascending in various forms through successive steps of subordination is an essential part of the idea of a hierarchy. There cannot be a hierarchy in which all the members are equal. The bishop must be more than the presbyter and the deacon, the presbyter more than the deacon; and whatever the number of stages through which the system rises to its highest point, the distinction of these three degrees is the determining type of the whole. On the one hand, as the bishops stand on a level, each one being the same as that which all the rest are, the system tends to broaden its base as much as possible. On the other, since difference does exist among the bishops, it equally endeavours to gather itself together in its highest point, and to terminate its structure in a supreme unity. The principle of the subordination is not less characteristic of the ecclesiastical system than the subordination itself. It is not only a hierarchical, but also a theocratic system; and the theocratic character is likewise inherent in the simple fundamental form. The subordination demanded is an

absolute requirement; it bears the same character of intrinsic necessity as that subordination which must be the relation of the human to the divine. The root notion of the episcopate is that the bishop is the representative of God and Christ, the organ in which the Holy Spirit, as the indwelling principle of the ecclesiastical society, chiefly delivers himself. All rests on divine authority. In the relation of the bishop to his congregation, the same relation is beheld which exists between Christ and the Church. On the one hand, it postulates an unconditional subordination, since all is grounded upon unity alone. As there is one God and one Christ, so there can be only one Church and one episcopate, and all must be simply subordinated to this unity. On the other side, however, it is a relation of piety, and all the feelings of piety which are included in the religious relation of man to God and Christ are interwoven with it. The bishop is to be the spiritual father of his church, and the members of his church are to cling to him with the confidence of children.[1] If then we place before our minds the original elements of this system, we find that its

[1] The Apostolic Constitutions prescribe, ii. 34, τὸν ἐπίσκοπον στέργειν ὀφείλετε ὡς πατέρα, but withal φοβεῖσθαι ὡς βασιλέα, τιμᾷν ὡς Κύριον. What is true of the bishop is true also of the clergy in general. In accordance with the sacerdotal ideas of the Old Testament, which Cyprian, the chief representative of the episcopal idea, adopts in their fullest extent, the clergy are held to be distinguished from the world by the same absolute superiority with which the bishop stands above his congregation. Therefore it is a mere degradation of their order, if they occupy themselves with worldly business and worldly things. According to Cyprian, Ep. 66, it was "pridem in concilio episcoporum statutum, ne quis de clericis et Dei ministris tutorem vel curatorem testamento suo constituat, quando singuli divino sacerdotio honorati et in clerico ministerio constituti nonnisi altari et sacrificiis deservire, et precibus atque orationibus vacare debeant.—Quae nunc ratio et forma in clero tenetur, ut qui in ecclesia Domini ordinatione clerica promoventur,—in honore sportulantium fratrum tanquam decimas ex fructibus accipientes, ab altaris sacrificiis non recedant." The decretum sacerdotum must be strictly maintained, "ne quis sacerdotes et ministros Dei altari ejus et ecclesiae vacantes ad seculares molestias devocet." The words of Cyprian express the great practical importance of this principle, and the view of the sacerdotal character of the clergy on which it rested. Compare Ep. Clem. ad Jac. c. 5, Hom. iii. 11.

essential condition is a stage of religious development at which there is felt a need to view the relation borne by Christ to the Church, as the Church's Lord, imaged in a visible representation. As the apostles took the place of Christ who sent them, so the bishops, as the successors of the apostles, could only be regarded as the representatives of Christ.

PART FOURTH.

CHRISTIANITY AS HIGHEST PRINCIPLE OF REVELATION— AND AS DOGMA.

WHEN we look back on the facts which have been passed in review, we observe two directions in which the idea of Christianity, indwelling in the Christian consciousness, realised itself. First of all, the limits within which Jewish particularism sought to confine the Christian principle of salvation had to be broken through, and Christian universalism to be firmly established. This could only be done by taking away the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, and by regarding the whole of mankind, in its need of the Christian salvation, and its readiness to receive it, as the wide field in which the idea of Christianity was to be realised. But while Christianity thus had from the first the tendency to expand itself into universalism, at the same time it felt it to be equally necessary to maintain, along with its universal point of view, its specific contents and character, and to arrive at an adjustment between its desire to be universal, and its desire to be specific, *i.e.* personal and individual, concrete and historical. By its universalism it was transported into the wide sphere of a view of the world thoroughly penetrated with heathen elements. It was brought into the closest contact with a mode of view in which Judaism, mixed with Greek philosophical ideas, was already so much decomposed, that Christianity too, when drawn within the same circle of ideas, necessarily assumed a character more or less allied to heathen polytheism. The Christian process of

salvation was changed into a universal process of world-development, in which Christ himself became merely one of the various conditioning principles of the world. In a word, secularisation was the danger which threatened Christianity on the side of its universalism. Montanism, from its moral and religious point of view, believed that this danger must be met by breaking with the world altogether; it made the Jewish-Messianic catastrophe of the world the principle of its position. On this side again then it became the task of the Christian mind to lead Christianity into such a path as would enable it to enter on a historical development corresponding to its original idea. When the idea of the Catholic Church was reached, all the steps found necessary on these various sides were taken. It was by this idea that all those were animated who wished at once to maintain Christian universalism, and to repel all that obscured the specific character of Christianity by Jewish or heathen influences, and all that seemed to take an extreme tendency in one direction or the other.

The idea of the Catholic Church existed, in the first instance, merely in the consciousness of the great majority; and its presence in their minds led them to endeavour, and that successfully, to realise it and give it a firm consistency. But so long as the Catholic Church thus continued to acquire its shape merely by the negative means of forming a contrast to all inadequate Christianity, it remained nothing but a form. For this form a determinate matter must now be found. There might be much agreement as to what should be kept away and repelled in accordance with the Christian consciousness, as it uttered itself in the majority. But it was not less important to couple affirmation with denial, and to determine positively what matter should be deemed intrinsic to the Christian consciousness itself. The Church had certainly taken a determinate form of constitution, since it had bishops, who could be regarded as the upholders and representatives of apostolic tradition and the consciousness of the Church. But this consciousness itself remained something very indeterminate, a mere form without matter, so long as dogma, as the matter of the apostolic

tradition, or of Christian revelation, had not been brought by development and gradual elaboration to its definite conception and expression. The synod of Nicaea, which concludes the first period of the history of the development of the Christian Church, brings very clearly before us the connection between this form and this matter—the constitutional form which the Church had received in the bishops, the representatives of its unity, and dogma as the matter, which the interpreters of tradition and the organs of the consciousness of the Church were to express, and to fix as the universally accepted doctrine. This synod, as œcumenical, is the most perfect representation of the episcopate and the Church; and in its dogma of the homoousia it expressed the highest that is contained in the dogmatic matter of the Christian consciousness.

It is thus the subject of dogma which now claims our attention. The Church would have been a mere form had it not contained within those bounds which, though firmly defined by itself, expanded equally on all sides to the broad idea of the Catholic Church, a definite matter in its Catholic dogma. It is in the doctrine of the person or the divine dignity of Christ that the whole development of dogma, in its first period, is concentrated. The greater or less prominence of all the dogmas contained in the matter of Christian belief is in proportion to their nearer or more remote relation to this chief dogma. This itself, however, highly placed as it is, is not in fact the nearest and immediate object of the Christian consciousness. For since Christ only comes in order to bring the Messianic salvation, he bears the relation of a mean to an end; and therefore, in the development of dogma, the one is evidently conditioned by the other. We can perceive, through the whole history of dogma, how the doctrine of the person of Christ, in the various forms of its elaboration, is but the reflection, the concrete expression of the views which were held concerning the work of Christ, the import and the nature of the Messianic salvation wrought by him. Each age, each party, invests the person of Christ with all the determining notions which, in its opinion, it is necessary to presuppose in order to make him capable of

being, in the determinate sense in which he requires to be, the Redeemer.

At the point of view taken by a critical consideration of the Gospel history, we are never at liberty to forget that what we know of Christ's doctrine generally, and of his doctrine concerning the import and dignity of his own person, only reaches us through the medium of the New Testament writers. Here also we must strictly distinguish the purely historical from the dogmatic point of view. We have to confine ourselves to the question, How is the person of Jesus portrayed in the various dogmatic conceptions found in the canonical books? All else belongs to the category of dogmatic presuppositions and affirmations, whatever the foundations of these may be.

First, we have the Christology of the synoptic gospels, and here it cannot be contended on any sufficient grounds that they give us the slightest justification for advancing beyond the idea of a purely human Messiah. The idea of pre-existence lies completely outside the synoptic sphere of view. Nothing can show this more clearly than the narrative of the supernatural birth of Jesus. All that raises him above humanity—though it does not take away the pure humanity of his person—is to be referred only to the causality of the πνεῦμα ἅγιον, which brought about his conception, or which, according to another view, descended on him at his baptism. This spirit, as the principle of the Messianic epoch, is also the element which constitutes his Messianic personality. The synoptic Christology has for its substantial foundation the notion of the Messiah, designated and conceived as the υἱὸς Θεοῦ; and all the points in the working out of the notion rest on the same supposition of a nature essentially human. God raised him from the dead, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it (Acts ii. 24). It is in itself impossible that the Messiah should fall a prey to death, because if he fell under the power of death, he would not be the Messiah. Thus even though the Messiah dies, yet death is annulled in life in him, if not in the supernatural nature of his person, yet in his Messianic dignity.

In the same sense, it is part of the conception of the Messiah, that he is the Prince of Life (Acts iii. 15). The highest enunciation concerning Christ in the synoptic Christology is, that all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth (Matt. xxviii. 18); or that he sits at the right hand of God,—an expression which denotes his immediate share in the divine power and the divine government of the world. He is exalted to this point by his death and resurrection. The connecting link between these two points which join heaven and earth is the Ascension, in which he is even seen to float from earth to heaven in visible form.

It is obvious, that in this Christology the general point of view is the elevation of the human to the divine, and that in the conception of the Messiah the second of these steps always implies the first. In contrast to this point of view stands that of the Johannine Logos-idea. According to this, the substantial conception of the person of Jesus is the conception of his essence as divine in itself. Here the thought travels, not from below upwards, but from above downwards, and the human is therefore only a secondary thing, and added afterwards.

Between these two opposing points of view, the Christology of Paul occupies a place of its own, and we cannot fail to see that it gives us the key of the transition from the one to the other. On one side Christ is essentially man, on the other he is more than man; and his humanity is already so enhanced and idealised, that the sense in which he is man is certainly inconsistent with the synoptic mode of view, which stands on the firm basis of his historical and human appearance. Christ is man, not only on one side of his being; but simply: he is man, like Adam, and only distinguished from Adam in that the peculiar element of his being is not the natural but the spiritual. And if, notwithstanding his spiritual nature, he is man, it is a necessary consequence that both the spiritual and the natural are an integral part of human nature. Over against the one man, through whom sin and death came into the world, stands the one man Jesus Christ, in whom the grace of God is given to the many (Rom. v. 15). As

by one man came death, so by one man came the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. xv. 21). As Adam was the first man, so is Christ the second man from heaven (ver. 47).[1] Christ is then essentially man, man like Adam, only man in a higher sense. The question now can only be, what higher conception we must unite with the person of Christ, while we rest on the substantial foundation of his human nature. The higher principle of the person of Christ is styled by the apostle the spiritual, the heavenly in him. By this he does not mean that a divine principle, different from human nature, descended and united with it; on the contrary, the higher principle is only the purer form of human nature itself. Christ, as the pneumatic man, who is from heaven or of heavenly origin, is the archetypal man, who shows forth in himself the perfection of human nature. As Adam, being the earthly natural man, is the man that has passed under sin and death, so Christ, being the spiritual, heavenly man, as he in whom the lower part of human nature is lost in the higher, is the sinless man. That Christ was without sin (2 Cor. v. 21), is a notion which essentially determines the conception of him. As Adam, with sin, which first began to manifest its power in him, had also the principle of death in him, so Christ being free from sin, was also free from death. He was not only not subject to the principle of death: he had in him the contrary principle of life, the quickening Spirit. As free from sin, he would not have been bound to die: in fact it was not on his own account that he submitted to the necessity of death, but because he took on himself the sins of men: in his thus dying, because he took on himself the sins of men, it is presupposed that σὰρξ, apart from sin, is mortal in itself. If the σὰρξ of Christ was only a ὁμοίωμα σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας, or—since ἁμαρτία is not to be separated from σὰρξ, σὰρξ being as such the seat of ἁμαρτία,

[1] It is not unimportant for a correct comprehension of the Pauline Christology, that according to the latest critical authorities, in 1 Cor. xv. 47, κύριος does not belong to the text. There is thus no longer any hindrance to the immediate connection of ἐξ οὐρανοῦ with ἄνθρωπος. Each of these terms is applied to Christ by the apostle: he is, as ἄνθρωπος, ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.

containing its root and predisposed to it—a ὁμοίωμα of σὰρξ in general,[1] then σὰρξ is a mere accident of Christ's nature; its true substance can only be πνεῦμα. As the apostle says simply (2 Cor. iii. 17), Christ is in himself, in his substantial essence, πνεῦμα, spirit. The essence of spirit was conceived by the apostle as a spiritual luminous substance; as a luminous splendour in the sense in which he speaks of the shining face of Moses (2 Cor. iii. 7 *sq.*). The eternal light-essence of God himself is reflected in this splendour of Christ. The whole relation of Christ to God rests on this, that Christ is essentially spirit, because it belongs to the spiritual light-nature of God to be reflected in a luminous splendour. Christ is therefore, as he is τὸ πνεῦμα, so also the κύριος τῆς δόξης, essentially spirit and light. And he does not first become this after his exaltation, but is it essentially: for his exaltation is simply the attainment to its full reality of that which he already was.

The idea of pre-existence is involved in this. The apostle can therefore only have conceived Christ, although he is supposed to have been essentially man in his pre-existing personality, as the spiritual light-form of the heavenly or archetypal man. It is an analogous representation which we find in the Christology of the pseudo-Clementine Homilies, where the primal man came forth first from God, by means of the wisdom which dwelt with God from eternity, or the Holy Spirit, which, since it dwells in Christ in the highest sense, and so forms his true essence, is also called the Spirit of Christ. The apostle must therefore have assumed a twofold primal man: an earthly man, who was from the beginning ἐκ γῆς χοϊκὸς and of psychical nature, and a heavenly archetypal

[1] Where σὰρξ is without ἁμαρτία, the apostle speaks only of a ὁμοίωμα σαρκὸς, or, since σὰρξ and ἁμαρτία belong to one another, of a ὁμοίωμα σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας. This mode of speech shows most clearly that he conceived ἁμαρτία as the essence of σὰρξ itself. Where σὰρξ is not a σὰρξ ἁμαρτίας, *i.e.* a σὰρξ, part of whose essence is ἁμαρτία, there there is nothing which can properly be called σὰρξ; it is not a σὰρξ ἁμαρτίας, and therefore not a true σὰρξ, but a mere ὁμοίωμα: he is only ὅμοιος to us. The Pauline Christology makes use also of the distinction of σὰρξ and σῶμα. There is a σῶμα πνευματικὸν, but not a σὰρξ πνευματικὴ, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. xv. 44, 50).

man, who pre-existed in heaven, till at the appointed time he appeared in the flesh as the δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, as the second Adam, or the ἔσχατος, as he is called with reference to the opening of the second or last period of the world by his coming into it. Nothing further can be said as to the mode in which the apostle conceived the birth of Christ in the flesh, and his entrance into humanity. Although the sending of the Son spoken of in Gal. iv. 4 and Rom. viii. 3 presupposes his existence, yet this is only the same pre-existence which is already involved in the ἐξ οὐρανοῦ of 1 Cor. xv. 47. These passages give no further information as to the manner of his appearance in the flesh. It is a general peculiarity of the Pauline Christology, that though it presupposes the pre-existence of Christ, the apostle's gaze is rather directed forwards to that which Christ has come to be, than backwards to that which he was in the past. This is the point of view from which we have to regard Rom. i. 3 *sq.*, a passage of importance for the apostle's Christology. The apostle here intends to bring together all the features which make up the conception of Christ's Messianic dignity. As the son of David, he is the Messiah; but a still more decisive proof of his Messiahship is this, that he was raised from the dead. What Christ is bodily as the son of David, that he is spiritually by his resurrection. This is the spiritual attestation of his Messianic dignity: for this, and this alone, could give actual tangible proof that the Spirit, which alone made him the Messiah, was actually in him. This is the conception of the πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης. This πνεῦμα is the πνεῦμα ἅγιον working the ἁγιωσύνη through which Christ is the ἅγιος, and Christians are the ἅγιοι, that is to say, actively proving itself to be the Messianic principle, and realising the idea of Messiahship. If we add this to the other steps of the Pauline Christology, we may determine this conception of Christ's personality in the following way. First, Christ is in himself, in his substantial essence, spirit: and his spiritual nature necessarily involves the conception of pre-existence in the ideal form of the primal man. Secondly, in the earthly and human manifestation of Christ, the Spirit, as the essential element

of his personality, becomes the Messianic Spirit,—the πνεῦμα becomes the πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης. Thirdly, as it is by his resurrection that Christ finally proves himself to be the Son of God in the highest sense, so the πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης first manifests itself in its full significance by its acting effectively as the πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν. As the Messianic Spirit to the person of Christ, so is the quickening Spirit to humanity in general, as the principle of life which works in it, removes sin and death, and glorifies the mortal σὰρξ into the image of the heavenly man. The idea represented in Christ, as the primal man, is fully realised when all humanity is conformed to his image, according to the determination of God (Rom. viii. 29).[1]

The doctrine of the majesty of Christ was first fixed dogmatically by the apostle Paul. The belief in the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, and in the attestation of his Messianic dignity given by these facts, necessarily involved, no doubt, a higher conception of his person. A more precise determination of this conception, however, was still desirable. The first point,

[1] There is one question which might still be raised. Though Christ was ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, do not the names of δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος and ἔσχατος Ἀδὰμ date from his earthly and human manifestation? But what can Christ have been as πνεῦμα, if his spiritual personality is not to be conceived in the form of human existence? It is affirmed that on the foundation of that doctrine of angels which the Jews combined with the Messianic idea, there rose a mode of conception, widely adopted in the early Church, especially among the people, according to which the pre-existent subject which appeared in Jesus was an angel: and an application of this to the Pauline Christology has been attempted (Theol. Jahrb. 1848, pp. 239 *sq.*). But there is nothing which indicates that Paul conceived Christ as an angel or a being like an angel: nor are we justified in giving either of the two ideas—that he was a spirit, and that he was essentially man—a less important place than the other. There is unquestionably a strong probability that in the passage 1 Cor. viii. 6, the apostle meant to ascribe not only pre-existence, but creation to Christ. But on the other hand, again, it cannot be controverted, that as ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα is limited and defined by the conception in Θεὸς, so is δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα limited by κύριος. The conception of κύριος refers only to that which Christ became by his resurrection and exaltation, not to his antemundane state. If in 1 Cor. xv. 47 κύριος is to be rejected, this passage also makes no exception with regard to the meaning of the word κύριος. The passages 1 Cor. x. 4, 2 Cor. viii. 9, and Rom. ix. 5, apart from the considerations given above, are not conclusive. They only show how arbitrarily the conception of Christ's Godhead has been extended within the Pauline Christology.—On the Pauline Christology generally, cf. my work Paulus, T. T. F. L. ii. 239-253.

from which the whole development started, was the resurrection. It was not possible to conceive the risen one, him who through his resurrection had become the conqueror over the grave, and had entered on a higher life, without imagining him as in a state of glorification, and in the most immediate nearness to God. He thus became the subject of all those determining notions which are included in the idea of κύριος, as he is simply called after his exaltation. But all the attributes ascribed to him as the risen one, as exalted to the right hand of the Father, still lacked a sufficient basis as long as his glorified state after his life on earth was not coupled with one of equal elevation preceding the same. A higher view of his personality generally could only be attained if he was the same before his earthly and human manifestation as he became after it. The majesty to which he was exalted after his death could no more be regarded as something extraordinary first granted to him by an act of God. It belonged to him in himself; it was in fact based on the essence of his personality. His human existence was therefore only a stage of transition; that he might thereby be, in this concrete form, determined by his human existence, that which in himself he was already. The idea of pre-existence is now the chief point on which the further development of Christology turns. Its whole tendency is more and more to join to the state of pre-existence such predicates as remove as much as possible the distinction between God and Christ. Even the apostle Paul is advancing from the idea of pre-existence to that of creation. Though this predicate has still with him an indeterminate and ambiguous character, it was soon afterwards fixed all the more determinately. It was Paul, however, with whom Christology first took this higher flight; and this was unquestionably a consequence of the higher idea he had of the office and the work of Christ. It was he who first contemplated Christianity from a higher and more universal point of view, and recognised in it the significance of a general principle that conditioned the course of the world and the process of human development. Such being his position, the view that

Christ was a superhuman and supramundane being rose before him as a necessary pre-supposition. With this was commenced the process of elevating ever more and more the conception of Christ's person, up to absolute unity with God, and of transferring to him all the analogous features which the philosophy of the age supplied.

The Christology of the Apocalypse comes next in time to that of Paul. Here, too, the same canon holds good; for, the mightier the expected catastrophe is which is to accompany Christ's coming, the higher must be the idea formed of the person of him who is to introduce it. With this writer, as with Paul, it is through his death and resurrection that Christ arrives at the highest divine power and glory. In the ἀρνίον ἐσφαγμένον that stands before the throne of God, the greatest and the least, the contraries of life and death, of heaven and earth, are united and beheld in one and the same contemplation. Not only does Christ, in the immediate presence of God, share a like power, and dominion, and adoration with God, but predicates are given him which seem to leave no essential distinction between him and God. He is termed Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, in the same sense in which God, the ruler of all, is called ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος. The new name (iii. 12) given to the Messiah, the same name of which it is said that no man knew it but he himself (xix. 12), is the unspeakable name of Jehovah. Indeed, not only are the seven spirits of God, in whom the power of the divine government that watches and rules over all is individualised, attributed to Christ (iii. 1); but he is also the ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, and the λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ (iii. 14; xix. 13). But all these predicates bear a mere external relation to the person of the Messiah. He is certainly called Jehovah, or God in the highest sense; but he is merely called so,—we are not justified in inferring from the name that a truly divine nature is ascribed to him. Nor does this follow from the designation of the Messiah as the λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ. The λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ furnishes the point of view from which the writer regards

the whole manifestation of Jesus, the word of God being both revealed and fulfilled by him. Christianity is itself the λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ (i. 9); all that composes the apocalyptic visions is the λόγοι ἀληθινοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ (xix. 9). It is Jesus who reveals the counsel of God, and who also executes it. What has been once spoken as the counsel of God must be brought to pass: here, too, Jesus is the λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ. To this refers the comparison of the agency of Jesus to a sharp sword going out of his mouth (xix. 15). When this sword is spoken of as going out of his mouth, it is clearly indicated that the comparison is between the sword and the word that goes out of the mouth of Jesus, the λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, which he reveals; and it is a sharp sword, that is, the whole counsel of God is accomplished by him as a stern judgment with irresistible power. Accordingly, he first receives this name, the Word of God, in this passage (xix. 13), where he descends from heaven to earth as a chastising judge. The fundamental conception is the word of God, or the will and counsel of God, accomplished in the strictness of the divine judgment. The expression, then, contains nothing metaphysical, conveys nothing concerning any relation that belongs essentially to the nature of the subject in question. From this we can at once discover the sense in which we should take the further and especially noticeable predicate given to Jesus when the Apocalypse styles him the ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ (iii. 14). Although, as the beginning of the creation, he is only the first created, this expression seems clearly enough to contain the conception of pre-existence. But if we consider, on the other hand, that immediately above (iii. 12) the name of the Messiah is called a new name, and that the pre-existence of the Messiah is not declared in plain words anywhere else in the whole book, we shall think it probable that this title is no dogmatic definition, but a mere name of honour, an enhanced expression of the idea that the Messiah is the highest creature, who was an object of attention even from the beginning, at the creation.

The peculiarity of the Christology of the Apocalypse therefore is,

that though the highest predicates are applied to Jesus, as the Messiah, they are all names given to him merely externally, not yet joined to his person with any intrinsic and essential unity. There is no intrinsic connection as yet between the divine predicates and the historical individual who is to receive them.[1] Although therefore we must not omit to notice the striking way in which the Christian consciousness felt urged, even at this period, to place the person of Jesus as high as possible, we must not the less remember that these predicates, in their whole extent, are a mere transcendental form, which still lacks a concrete matter based on the personality of Jesus himself. They are not yet indwelling features of his nature, rising out of the substantial essence of his person itself. Nothing more is implied than that Christ must have a position adequate to the great expectations concerning the last things, of which he is the chief subject. The Apocalypse embraces nothing metaphysical within its circle of vision; it takes its point of view altogether from below, and only transfers to the Messiah after his death all that gives him his divine majesty. Compare v. 12.

A further stage of development is formed by the Epistle to the Hebrews and the lesser Epistles of Paul. In their Christology Christ has come to be regarded as a being divine in himself.

The fundamental conception of the Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that of the Son. It is as the Son of God, in the specific sense, that Christ receives all the predicates which are here given to him. As the Son, he is the image, the immediate reflection of the glory of God, who bears the impress of the divine essence in the concrete reality of his personal existence (i. 3). He is thus, as the Son of God, placed simply above the world: he is a being essentially divine and distinct from the world. Though he has so much in common with the world that, like all things, he came forth from God, and on this account he is called πρωτότοκος (i. 6), still it is he who upholds all things by the word

[1] Cf. Zeller, Beiträge zur Einleitung in die Apocalypse—Theol. Jahrb. 1842 p. 709 *sq.*

of his power (i. 3); it is he, through whom God created the Aeons (i. 2), that is, the present and the future, or the visible and the invisible world. The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews rises so high above the human sphere, that it employs itself in the first instance with fixing more exactly the conception of the Son in his distinction from the angels, above whom the Son, as such, is far exalted. This is done by the name of Son, which belongs to him alone, as well as by the other predicates applied to him (i. 4-14).

This Christology therefore stands, speaking generally, half-way between that of Paul and that of John. However high Paul places Christ, he is still essentially man, the δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ: but here his original humanity is completely lost sight of, and he is transported, as a purely divine being, into the supra-material region. On the other hand, however, the Son has not yet become the Logos in the Johannine sense. He is not himself the Logos, but only upholds all things by the word of his power (i. 3). It appears strange, that the Epistle remains at this point, without going on to identify the Son with the Logos, when we observe that it personifies the Logos of God (iv. 12, 13), in a manner that naturally leads to this identification. In spite of the personification of the Logos in this passage, the two conceptions are still so little related to each other, that the divine nature of the Son is determined, not by the conception of the Logos, but by that of the Spirit. The atoning power of Christ's death is derived from his possession of the αἰώνιον πνεῦμα (ix. 14). He reconciles the world and God, because he offers himself to God in the element of the Spirit, because not the blood of bulls and goats, but the πνεῦμα αἰώνιον is the propitiation, the power which determines and makes efficacious the peculiar nature and agency of this death. What makes Christ an everlasting high priest, and gives him the power of inextinguishable life, so that the principle of life dwells in and determines his essence, is the πνεῦμα, the fact that he is a purely spiritual being, like God, who is himself spirit and the Father of spirits (xii. 9). At the same time, the

writer conceives the relation of the Son to the Father as one of strict subordination. The Son is so dependent on the Father, that even in that which immediately concerns the Son, the Father is the active subject. He has made the Son for a little time lower than the angels (ii. 7). Christ did not glorify himself to be made high priest, but he that said to him, "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee:" the passage from the Psalms on which the conception of Sonship is chiefly founded (i. 5). This can only be understood of a relation fixed by the will of God; but on the other hand the expressions ἀπαύγασμα and χαρακτὴρ designate it as a natural relation. Thus we find already in this Epistle the elements of those two ideas which always formed the chief antithesis in the conception of this relation. Since the Son is, in one way or the other, a being divine in himself, human existence must first be assumed by him. The author does not form any more definite conception of the incarnation. He merely speaks of Christ's becoming like men in all things,—in their moral weakness by his ability to be tempted (ii. 18), in their feebleness and finiteness by his being made lower than the angels (ii. 6-9), and above all by his ability to suffer. As this took place with a view to redemption, in order that, as an eternally appointed high priest, he might cleanse men from sin, so the whole personal being of Christ is contemplated under the idea of a process of moral development. The prayer of Jesus for rescue from destruction and death was heard because of his submission. He was brought up again from the realm of the dead (xiii. 20); received again into heaven; after he had been made lower than the angels, he was again exalted above them (iv. 14; vii. 26; i. 4); he was crowned with joy, glory, and honour (ii. 9; cf. i. 9; xii. 2), and obtained a seat at the right hand of God for ever (i. 3, 8, 13; viii. 1, 10, 12). All this makes up the notion of completion, in which, according to the view of the Epistle, beginning and end meet together. In the process performed in the person of Jesus there is merely exhibited that universal process, in which the imperfect gives way to the perfect, the present to the future, Judaism to Christianity—in which

the idea moves through its untrue form, in order to reach its true concrete reality. The idea of the high priest, prefigured in the Old Testament in the person of Melchisedec, is realised when the true high priest, who offers himself, and by his death puts an end to the imperfect Levitical priesthood, entering in by his own blood into heaven, appears before the face of God, and sits down on the right hand of the majesty on the throne of grace (ix. 11 ; x. 12).

A similar Christology is found in the lesser Epistles of Paul. Here, however, the position from which the person of Christ is viewed is more definitely speculative, metaphysical, allied to Gnosticism. Here, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Christ is called, in respect of his nature, which is divine in itself, the image of God (Col. i. 15). He is the reflection of God, in whom the invisible essence of God is beheld in visible form. This conception is more closely determined thus :—All things were created in him, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers. Thus all things, from the highest regions of the spiritual world to the lowest, have begun and continued to be in him. With the conception of the Son, the object is no longer merely to assign to him his definite place, in contrast to the angels; he has now the significance of a principle which stands absolutely at the head of all spiritual beings, and forms the connecting link between God and the world. On the one hand, as the first-born of the whole creation, he is placed in one series with the creature, and, though in time and rank the first-born of all that is created, he is but created by God, like all else. But on the other, inasmuch as all created things are upheld and supported by him, and have in him the substantial basis of their unity, he stands absolutely above them, and is thus absolutely distinct from the world. At the same time, his relation to the world can only be styled one of indwelling. This is what is to be understood when it is said that all was created *in* him, rather than *through* him (Col. i. 16). But the same notion is quite specially contained in a peculiar conception transferred to Christ,—that of the πλήρωμα, in which the indwelling relation of

Christ to the Church is merely viewed as the more concrete form of his universal relation to the world in general. This is a specific conception of the two Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. Christ is the πλήρωμα, because it is first in him that God, who is in himself, quits his abstract being, and opens himself to the fulness of concrete life (Col. i. 19; ii. 9; Eph. i. 22, 23; iii. 19; iv. 13). Christ is the πλήρωμα in the highest and absolute sense, ὁ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρούμενος. He is the πλήρωμα of God, inasmuch as in him that which God is abstractly and ideally in himself becomes filled with its determinate concrete matter. The Church is Christ's πλήρωμα, as the concrete real being with which, as his matter, Christ is filled. The expression πλήρωμα is meant to indicate a concrete real being as the contents of another being with which it goes together to make up a unity of form and contents. As with the conception of the πλήρωμα, so with that of the σῶμα. The Church is the σῶμα of Christ (Eph. i. 23; iv. 12). Christ himself is also called the σῶμα: he is the σῶμα of the Godhead, inasmuch as the whole fulness of the Godhead, all that fills the idea of the Godhead with its determinate concrete matter, dwells σωματικῶς in him (Col. ii. 9). And if he himself is the σῶμα of the Godhead, the Church can only be his σῶμα in a more concrete sense, since, as the σῶμα of the Godhead, he is the head of the Church, and the principle on which the whole inwardly articulated organism of the Church depends (Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19). The notions determining the relations of Christ to the Church are first endowed with their full meaning by means of the universal idea on which the Christology of these Epistles is based. Christ is the head, the principle, the central point of all things. In his person is expressed a universal idea, the form of a determinate view of the world. Now, as it belongs to the essence of the idea, that what it is in itself that it also is in reality, so the idea contained in the person of Christ must be realised in a series of determinate steps. This is done by that ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν Χριστῷ,—δι' αὐτοῦ ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν, which is the fundamental thought of the two Epistles (Eph. i. 10; Col. i. 20). As all pro-

ceeds from him, so all is to be brought back again in him to unity. In this sense the work of Christ is regarded as consisting in the universal reconciliation and union of the universe. His activity, which redeems all, fills all with its influence, and joins the highest to the lowest, extends not only to the earth, but also to the world below, to the whole universe, in so far as it is tenanted by intelligent beings (Eph. iv. 8, *sq.*). All must be gathered together in Christ, and joined in him to that original unity in which it has in him the substantial basis of its being and continuance.

The Epistle to the Philippians moves in a similar sphere of contemplation. It distinguishes the form of God from the form of a servant; and opposes the εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ to the ὑπάρχειν ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, with the meaning, that Christ must accomplish in his own person a process which passes through determinate steps. When he has entered on the path of moral endeavour, and finally proved his obedience, and thus attested the divinity of his nature in itself, then, and then only, does that, which he is in himself, belong to him in truth, and in the full reality of divine being.[1]

If we compare Christology, as it stands at this point of its development, with the Johannine form of the same doctrine, we shall find that no great advance needed to be made in order to reach the latter. All that was really needed was that the elements already present should be brought to a more precise conception and expression. This is done by means of the Johannine notion of the Logos.

[1] On the Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the lesser Epistles of Paul, cp. Köstlin: Der Lehrb. des Evangeliums und der Briefe Johannis, 1842, p. 352 *sq.*, 387 *sq.*; Schwegler: Das nachapostolische Zeitalter, ii. p. 286 *sq.*; my Paul, ii. 35 *sq.*; Theol. Jahrb., 1849, p. 501 *sq.*, 1852, p. 133 *sq.* As to the Christology of the Epistle to the Philippians, and on a conception contained in it, which can only be explained by means of Gnostic ideas—the denial of a ἁρπαγμὸς, by which he who was existing ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, but had not yet attained such identity with God as the εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ, would have gained by no moral means, but directly and violently, that which he was to gain, but could only reach through moral means: as the well-known Gnostic Aeon attempted to do, in its unnatural insurrection, which, however, wrought the sudden breach between the finite and the absolute, and was, in so far, metaphysically necessary—see Theol. Jahrb., 1849, p. 502 *sq.*, 1852, p. 133 *sq.*

The highest expression for the whole peculiar matter of the Christian consciousness in reference to the person of Christ is now found in the conception of the Logos. Here the same subject, which in its external and temporal manifestation is the man Jesus, is designated as an independent divine being, standing in the most immediate relation to God, nay, even as God. In the proposition (John i. 1) Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος, the Logos is declared to be, if not the absolute God, yet a divine being. It is involved in the conception of the Logos, and the whole description given of him, that he can only be conceived as a divine being, with underived subsistence, and this is further indicated when it is said of him that he was πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, that he is ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς. The peculiar construction of εἶναι with πρὸς and εἰς and the accusative is intended to designate the being of the Logos with God as not merely quiescent, but active. The Logos is in a constant activity and movement, whose object is God. His indwelling relation to God is expressed in this, that, as the ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, he is, as it were, he who moves towards the heart of God, and seeks to put away all that divides and distinguishes him from God, in unity with him. This presupposes, however, that he is conscious of his personal distinction from God. His relation to God is at once, and equally, distinction in unity, and unity in distinction. His absolute essence consists in the intimate union of these two necessary elements.

There is only one mode of explaining the fact that that divine majesty, which the Christian consciousness connected with the person of Jesus, found so direct and simple an expression in the conception of the Logos. The Logos-idea cannot have been at all strange to the time and the locality in which the Gospel of John appeared. If we bear in mind the importance of the Logos-idea in the Alexandrian religious philosophy of this time, we shall see that it is against all historical analogy to suppose that the ideas of the age, and among them the wide-spread Logos-idea, contributed nothing to guide the evangelist to his doctrine of the Logos. It is, however, true that he could not borrow the matter of the idea of

the Logos from the current philosophy. It could not have occurred to him to transfer this conception to Christ, had it not already become a standing part of the Christian consciousness that Christ was to be placed, in respect of his higher dignity, in such a relation of identity to God as the Logos-conception expresses. The process can therefore be only thus stated: If the higher dignity attributed by the Christian consciousness to Christ was to be brought to a precise conception and expression, the Logos-conception, it seemed, offered the most effectual means of doing this. Its adoption for this purpose may have been further commended by the fact that Christian doctrine, of which Jesus is the author, was called ὁ λόγος Θεοῦ, or simply ὁ Λόγος. Already in the Apocalypse Jesus is called the λόγος Θεοῦ. The meaning "word," *i.e.* "organ of revelation," must be kept in view in the conception of the Logos, since λόγος only means "reason" in so far as thinking is also speaking. But the Gospel of John also bears a very close relation to the Gnostic circle of ideas, and in particular to the Gnostic doctrine of Aeons, in which similar conceptions, such as λόγος, φῶς, πλήρωμα, χάρις, ἀλήθεια, occur in a quite analogous connection. Here again, however, the original Christian mode of view shows its peculiar and practical character. It puts aside all those multifarious ideas, with which Gnostic fancy and speculation filled the supramaterial world, holds fast only the simple conception of the Logos, and gathers together in it all that the Christian mind was to consider the highest expression of its view of Christ's person. But however precisely we may distinguish between form and matter in the Johannine Logos-conception, with regard to previously-existing elements, there is ultimately only one explanation of the reception of this idea into the Johannine Christology, viz., that the author held the same position, as to the absolute idea of God, which was held by the Alexandrian religious philosophy and by Christian Gnosticism. The Logos-idea, in its higher sense, only finds its proper place in systems which remove the idea of God, as he exists in pure abstraction, apart and self-contained, to so transcendental a

distance, that the relation between God and the world can only be constituted by an organ of revelation such as the Logos. Further, the more transcendental the whole mode of contemplation is, the more surely, here as with Philo, are opposite ideas confronted without any link of connection. On the one hand, the whole significance of the Logos rests on the distinctness of his essence from God, which is due to the impossibility of an immediate contact between the highest God and the finite. On the other hand, it is necessary to assert his identity with God, in order that he may communicate the divine to the world.[1]

The evangelist himself states very plainly how absolutely he conceives the idea of God (i. 18). No one has seen God at any time; for the essence of God, absolutely exalted above all that is finite, is of its own nature invisible, and God and Spirit are simply identical conceptions (iv. 24). It follows from this transcendency of God, that a special being, who shall effect a communication between him and the world, is necessarily required. Such is the Logos, in his God-revealing function. This function he can only fulfil as possessing an immediate unity with God. As the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, and as such alone, can he reveal and declare that which, without him, is hidden away from men in the absolute and self-contained essence of God. In this identity with God, he is the only begotten Son (i. 14, 18). Since he is expressly termed God, the predicate "Son," which is given to him, can only refer to that community of essence which exists between him and God. The conception of Son necessarily involves the conception of generation. The world,

[1] Cp. Zeller, die Philosophie der Griechen, iii. 2, p. 321; Wolff, die Philonische Philosophie in ihren Hauptmomenten, 2d ed. Gothenburg, 1858, p. 20: "In the Logos the absolute which is in itself makes itself an object, becomes concrete, a Spirit with life in himself: whereas, apprehended merely on the side of being, he is abstract God, form without matter. Being is only the one constituent of the divine; the divine is not completed till the other constituent is added, namely, the Logos, in which God appears as Spirit, as living creative Spirit. The divine becomes another to itself; yet this other is nothing strange to it, nothing separate from it, but is in it." God is essentially both the two at once; but the two stand apart and unconnected.

with all that is, was made by him: he, on the contrary, was not made, but begotten; and the term "Son of God" has accordingly quite a different sense in the Gospel of John from that which the Synoptics give it. What those who were born of God (i. 13, 14) are relatively, that he, as the only begotten of God, is absolutely. Therefore God is his Father in quite a special and peculiar sense (v. 18; x. 36). Unity and equality with God are the basis of this relation. So completely is the Logos, as the Son, one with the Father, that he is indeed only the concrete manifestation of the Father. He who sees him sees the Father (xiv. 9): he and the Father are one (x. 30; cp. 38, and xvii. 21). Though the Father and the Logos, or the Son, are two distinct persons, and have each his own personal self-consciousness, yet the personal distinction is taken away by this, that each recognises and knows his own personal ego in the ego of the other. The moral unity—for such is the fittest term—which binds the two together, makes that which is in truth a part of their essence to be also their voluntary action. This part of their essence, and this action, is that each so fully resigns his own self to that of the other, that he knows himself one with him, and his own self-consciousness is absorbed in that of the other. By virtue of this unity of essence and will, the Logos or the Son, in his human manifestation, is endowed with truly divine attributes. As the Father has life in himself, absolutely and originally, so the Son has life in himself, absolutely and originally, given to him by the Father (v. 26). The fulness of the Father's power is his also: he works with it (v. 19 *sq.*); similarly, his knowledge is without limit (i. 49 *sq.*; ii. 25; iv. 19; vi. 64; xi. 4, 14).

The Logos, in this unity with God, is the highest organ of revelation. But while he performs this revealing function in the world, and also works as the principle of the life and the light of men, he has an antithesis in darkness. And the more deeply he enters into the world where the two principles, light and darkness, are opposed, the more does the other side of his being, viz., all the finiteness and humanity which belongs to him in distinction

from God, come into view. He is not only the light which shines in darkness, he has also become flesh, and submits to all the consequences of a fleshly manifestation. His becoming flesh forms the transition from the eternal Logos, existing apart and in himself, to the historical Messiah who appeared in the person of Jesus. And here, more than at any other point, we are forced to observe how different and incommensurable are the two factors which make up the Logos-idea, and how real is the distinction between the Johannine and the synoptical Christology. While the latter fixes the first entry of the Messiah into existence at the time at which the πνεῦμα ἅγιον descended upon him, and marks the birth of Jesus, in the most unmistakable manner, as the starting-point of the whole Gospel history, the Gospel of John, on the contrary, contents itself with laying simply down: ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. Although the directness of this expression seems to repel analysis, it cannot conceal the disparity of the human and the divine elements in the Johannine Christ. While the term σὰρξ, according to its true meaning, obliges us to suppose that the Logos assumed a body, on the other hand, the words σὰρξ ἐγένετο, when taken in connection with the train of thought contained in the prologue of the Gospel, can only be regarded as a subordinate detail. The Logos, from the beginning, is so truly the same identical subject, that it is not possible, during the whole course of its agency, for any new cause to enter and make it become, now for the first time, this subject, or any other subject than it has been before. His presence in the world is already given in full reality in his shining as the light in the darkness. As he is the same subject from the beginning, so those who by faith become one with him stand, both before and after, in the same relation of sonship to God. His becoming flesh is but the highest manifestation of his glory, for those who receive him. The σὰρξ ἐγένετο has therefore by no means the significance which, as being the very act of incarnation, it might seem to possess; it is merely an accident of the changeless personality of the Logos. The identity of the Logos with the historical person of Jesus having been

simply laid down as a fact in the words ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, the essential theme of the whole Gospel history is the self-manifestation of the Logos. The Logos, identical with the person of Jesus, manifests himself in the works, the teaching, and the death of Jesus; and the point everywhere is, that he should be recognised as that which he truly is. This self-manifestation of Jesus as the Logos is also his continuous glorification; and the most important stage of this glorification is the death of Jesus. In the Johannine Gospel the resurrection is identified with the coming of the Lord in the Spirit, and so receives a spiritualised meaning, and thus in this Gospel the end and the beginning are most intimately connected. Jesus goes back to the Father, from whom he came forth, thither where he was before (vi. 62). Before, when he had not yet entered into the world and become flesh, he was the purely divine Logos, who had not yet become flesh; and he must afterwards be the same. It thus follows necessarily that—since the Spirit alone quickens, but the flesh profits nothing (vi. 63)—he puts off the earthly veil of flesh which he had assumed, in order that he may resume his true and pure being, in immediate unity with the Father, with whom, as he is himself Spirit in the highest absolute sense (iv. 24), only the spiritual can be one.[1]

So powerful, even at this date, is the tendency to regard the whole manifestation and personality of Jesus from the point of view of his supramaterial being, and to subordinate his humanity to his deity to such an extent, that all the reality of his personal existence falls on the side of the divinity, or (if this expression be too strong) the two sides of his nature stand perfectly apart and unharmonised. So soon as the Christian consciousness had attached itself firmly, as in this Gospel, to the Logos idea, the point was reached, from which Christian dogma could grow and develop in its peculiar determinate direction, till it reached the full body of Christian doctrine. Even at the middle of the second century, however, this idea, with the essential definitions and limitations furnished by the Johannine doctrine, is by no

[1] Comp. my Kritischen Untersuchungen über die Kanon. Evang. p. 77 *sq.*

means so firmly established, that it may be taken as the objective expression of the general dogmatic consciousness, as certainly would have been the case had the fourth Gospel been generally known from the end of the first century. On the contrary, the dogma of that period continues to waver between various views, till in the second half of the second century the Logos-idea, in its Johannine form, gradually wins its way to predominance. The following stages of thought deserve notice:—

1. The principal conception which is used to denote the divine element in Christ's person is not λόγος, but πνεῦμα; the word πνεῦμα sometimes denoting the spiritual principle which forms a proper and invariable part of the essence of God; sometimes an angel,—that is, one of the beings in whom the spiritual principle assumes an individual existence with a concrete form. The former conception occurs in the Epistles of Clement of Rome, where the divine and human elements in Christ are distinguished as spirit and body;[1] and this view is also partly adopted by the Epistle of Barnabas. The latter signification seems to prevail in the Shepherd of Hermas; the Son of God, who is more ancient than every creature, who at the creation stood counselling by the side of the Father, who holds and supports the whole creation, is called spiritus sanctus, but only in the same sense in which the angels are spiritus sancti.[2] The idea that the pre-existent subject which appeared in Jesus was an angel, was very wide-spread and popular in the ancient church, and also belonged peculiarly to Ebionitism; even with Justin the doctrine of angels is very closely connected with Christology.[3] It was thus natural that the incarnation should be conceived solely as the assumption of a body, and the body as the vessel in which the Spirit dwells.[4]

[1] Cp. the second Epistle of Clem. Rom. ad Cor. cap. ix. and the Epistle of Barnabas, cap. vii.

[2] Simil. ix. 12, v. 2 *sq.*

[3] Cp. Justin, Apol. i. 6; Hermas Simil. v. 6; Epiph. Haer. xxx. 3, 16.

[4] Upon this form of early Christology, and the data thereon, cp. the dissertation of J. Helweg, Die Vorstellung von der Präexistenz Christi in der ältesten Kirche, Theol. Jahrb. 1848, 144 *sq.*; Hilgenfeld, die apostol. Väter, 169 *sq.*

2. Even when the Logos-idea begins to be applied to Christ, it appears in so uncertain and indefinite a form, that we can scarcely go so far as to identify it with the Johannine conception. We are not to regard it as a distinct dogmatic statement when we find Clement of Rome saying, in his first Epistle, that God ἐν λόγῳ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης αὐτοῦ συνεστήσατο τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἐν λόγῳ δύναται αὐτὰ καταστρέψαι, although λόγος τῆς μεγαλωσύνης, as well as σκῆπτρον τῆς μεγαλωσύνης (cap. 16), and ἀπαύγασμα τῆς μεγαλωσύνης αὐτοῦ (cap. 36), can only signify Christ. Again, it is only the want of a more precise determination of the Logos-idea that can explain such a doctrine as we find in the pseudo-Ignatian Epistles, which even makes God, in a Patripassian sense, the subject directly identical with Christ.[1] When, however, in the same Epistles, Christ is not only said to have come forth from the one Father, and to go back to him, but also, as the Son of God, through whom the one God has revealed himself, is called his λόγος ἀΐδιος, οὐκ ἀπὸ σιγῆς προελθὼν, we are brought very near to the Johannine doctrine.[2] We are therefore surprised, when we come to Justin, to find that with him the Logos-idea, though very familiar to him, differs widely from the form which it bears in the fourth Gospel. Christ, or the Son of God, is with Justin a being numerically or personally distinct from God; he is begotten by the Father, or (in accordance with the doctrine of emanation) has come forth from him as fire is kindled by fire without lessening of substance; he is the first-born of the whole creation, who was with the Father before the creation, through whom the Father has made all things; he is himself God. Yet notwithstanding all these predicates, he is so subordinate to the Father, that he is merely classed among the intermediate beings through whose agency God works, and is expressly called the servant of the Creator. The term λόγος, far from specifically denoting Christ, is only one among the many diverse appellations which are indis-

[1] Ad Ephes. i., ad Rom. vi. Cp. my work on the Ignatian Epistles, in opposition to Bunsen, p. 108 *sq.*

[2] Ad Ephes. vii. 19; ad Magnes. vii. 8.

criminately applied to this divine being of the second rank.[1] It thus appears that the Logos-idea was current and well known in the Christian Church at the time of Justin; but the writings of the same Father also show plainly that the true and original source of the current conception was not the Gospel of John. It would otherwise be quite inconsistent with the weighty significance which he attached to the idea, that he should utterly ignore the supreme authority of the Gospel in this direction. Though we do not allege that this silence was caused by the non-existence of the Gospel, it can only have arisen from want of acquaintance with it; and this again cannot be explained, if we suppose that the Gospel had long been credited with apostolic authenticity.

3. But not only did the Logos-idea give an exact dogmatic determination of the conception which was connected with the divine majesty of Christ: it contained an element which involved a definite distinction between the Christian and the Jewish consciousness of God. So long as the divine element in Christ was conceived under the indeterminate notion of the Spirit, or in the form of angelology, there was no danger of a collision with the strictly monarchian Jewish idea of God. But when the Logos-idea appeared, notwithstanding that it was an outcome of the Alexandrian philosophy of religion, such an antagonism was inevitable. It is an essential part of the Johannine doctrine of the Logos, that he is God; and even Justin, though he has a much lower view of the Logos, expressly sets forth that he is God.[2] Now this is the point at which an opposition arose between the two forms of Christology—one of which continued Jewish, while the other was developing into Catholic dogma. Thus the Christology of the pseudo-Clementine Homilies at once states the Judaistic view of Christ's person in its most developed form, and not less characteristically seizes, in all its sharpness, the point at which the Christology that rests on the Logos-idea seems to infringe the

1 Cf. Helweg, 258 *sq.* Hilgenfeld, Krit. Unters. über die Evang. Justin's, etc., 1850, 297 *sq.* Das Evang. und die Briefe Joh. 1849, 130 *sq.*

2 Apol. i. 63: ὅς καὶ λόγος πρωτότοκος ὢν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Θεὸς ὑπάρχει.

monarchy of God, and simply refuses to recognise a son of God who is himself God. According to the Homilies, the Lord, as he did not teach other Gods besides the Creator, so likewise did not call himself God; and rightly named him blessed, who called him the Son of God, of the Creator of the Universe.[1] We can fancy ourselves transported into the time of the Arian controversies, when, in the same passage of the Homilies, the antithetical conceptions of "unbegotten" and "begotten" are applied to determine the distinction between the Father and the Son in such a way that the two are separated by a gulf which cannot be bridged over. As the Son is thus simply another than the Father, the same name of God may not be given to him; for the begotten cannot have a like name with the unbegotten, even though the begotten be of like essence with the begetter. The name of God is only to belong to that which is peculiar to him, and simply incommunicable. The Johannine principle of the Godhead of the Logos, to which alone this polemic can refer, thus possessed no authority for those who adhered firmly to the strict Jewish conception of God. It is therefore clear that the Logos-idea belongs to a religious sphere in which the barriers of the Jewish consciousness of God had widely given way. Still, by the Johannine doctrine, the Son, or the Logos held to be God, had been so subordinated to the infinitely greater Father, that the distinction between the two was sufficiently broad. Nevertheless, so soon as they were placed on such an equality, though but in one point, as the common name expresses, the goal of the further development of dogma was at once indicated, and the movement that had once begun could not pause, till their identity was thought out and established on every side as thoroughly as possible.

We have thus given a general indication of the direction in which the dogma of the Godhead of Christ proceeded in its further course under the guidance of the Logos-idea. It was under this idea, as a general fundamental form, that the divine element of Christ was now conceived; it was by means of this that the dogmatic consciousness sought to establish more precisely the different

[1] Hom. xvi. 15.

points which are contained in that conception. Though it cannot be shown that Justin was acquainted with the fourth Gospel, the influence of the Johannine Logos-idea can be traced, ever more clearly and definitely, in his immediate successors, Tatian, Athenagoras, and Theophilus. But the idea has two sides: the first of these, the identity of the Logos with the Father, is confronted by the second and not less important one, viz., the personality of the Logos himself. It is the latter of these two sides that these Fathers chiefly labour to define. If the Logos was the Son of God, and if the Son was to be conceived in the full reality of his existence as such, it was necessary to gain a definite notion of his commencement. The Logos, as the Son, could only have originated or have been begotten from the essence of God. This origination must have taken place at a definite point of time; and this could only be the same time at which all things first entered on existence. The same creative word which called all things into existence is also the word of God, on which rests the conception of the Logos as the Son. Again, though the Logos, as the Son, originated at a definite point of time, and by a determinate act of God, still it is possible to suppose that he existed before that time as the Logos, and afterwards assumed a different sort of existence as the Son. The twofold meaning of the word Logos, in fact, led of itself to the distinction of the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and the λόγος προφορικὸς, which Theophilus first made part of accepted terminology. The general relation in which the indwelling thought stands to the spoken word, or the idea, as it is apart and in itself, to its realisation, became the fundamental view which was used for conceiving the relation of the Father and the Son. Now, the outward word which proceeds from the inward thought, or the idea in the course of its self-realisation, could only be conceived after the analogy of a natural process, in which life is begotten from life; and God, as the primal substance and the primal power of all being and all life, has the natural impulse to produce something else from himself, or to send forth something in emanation. Thus the theory of emanation and subordination

took shape. Here the matter of principal importance was that the emanations and projections of the divine essence in the succession of the Father and the Son, in which the Holy Spirit was naturally included as a third member, should be so marked off and defined in a Trinitarian sense, as not to form too continuous a series with the remainder of created beings. The chief representative of this most material and concrete form of the idea of the Trinity is Tertullian.[1]

But the deeply material character of this idea could not fail to call forth a counter movement. The point at which, above all, an excessive materialisation of the idea of God must be checked, was the divine act of the begetting of the Son; for here the categories of temporal origination and growth, and the same material affections which the Gnostic theories were charged with supposing, were introduced into the essence of God. It can therefore be only regarded as a reaction against the too material form which the Logos-idea assumed when doctors of the Church, as Athenagoras and Irenaeus, abstained entirely from fixing the procession of the Son from the Father as a special ingredient of the conception of their relation. But since it is on this very constituent that the personal subsistence of the Son depends, the distinction is too much thrown into the background by these Fathers in comparison with the unity; the Son has too little disengaged himself from identity with the Father. Those who felt a decided disinclination (as the Alexandrians especially did) to all anthropomorphisms and emanational ideas, could not but feel it most difficult to hold fast to the distinction of the Son from the Father, as the conception of the two, as personally different beings, required. This is seen more remarkably in Clement of Alexandria than in any other doctor. In the lofty and transcendental predicates which he applies to the Son, we have simply a reflection of the absolute essence of the Father,

[1] Here (as well as with the following) comp. my Geschichte der Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit, i. 163 *sq.*, where these points are developed in more detail, and the references are given.

and the character of the Logos as the agent of mediation between God and the world almost disappears in his unity with God. The antithesis of the two dominant views was presented in its sharpest form in the abstract and in fact purely negative Alexandrian conception of God on the one hand, and the material realism of a Tertullian on the other. Tertullian, indeed, could only conceive the essence of God as a bodily substance. In accordance with this antithesis the two leading notions, which had to be combined in unity in the conception of the Son, viz., his personal subsistence and his identity with the Father, fell out of connection with each other. The Son believed in was either personally indistinguishable from the Father; or, even though he was begotten or sent forth by emanation from the Father's essence, still, as having had a commencement in time, and being deeply subordinated to the Father, he belonged to the class of created beings.

That the Son must be both together—one with the Father, as well as personally distinct from him—this doctrine had acquired, even at the time of Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement (although these doctors did not perfectly agree), a growing predominance, and even laid a certain claim to church authority. This, however, can only be said in a limited sense. These doctors were opposed by others, who could by no means reconcile themselves to the idea of a lesser God, who had proceeded from God and assumed an enduring personal subsistence. The name of "monarchians" will characterise their standpoint as that of abstract Jewish monotheism. All emanational ideas, all suppositions of an inward distinction and living process in God, all that the church doctors, in the spirit of the theology which they raised on the basis of a plurality of divine essences, denoted by the term "economy," is here kept at a distance. Besides monotheistic tendencies, other forces also contributed to give these teachings such importance that during the whole of the third century it remained doubtful which mode of thought would at last gain the ascendant.

One of the first in the series of these monarchians is Praxeas.

He is only known to us from the work written by Tertullian against him; strangely enough, he is neither mentioned by Theodoret nor by the author of the Philosophoumena—though, as a heretic who had appeared in Rome, he cannot have been unknown to the latter—nor by any other doctor. According to Tertullian, he distinguished the divine and human elements in Christ only as spirit and flesh. The same subject is as spirit the Father, as flesh the Son. Here, as wherever the divine in Christ is merely made to consist in a πνεῦμα identical with the essence of God, and the σὰρξ is regarded as the natural correlative of the πνεῦμα, Patripassianism, as it is called, is the inevitable consequence. Nor did Praxeas himself deny Patripassianism: only he did not wish to speak simply of a *pati* of the Father, but only of a *compati* of the Father with the Son. This *compati* is in fact a natural conclusion from his theory; for the Father as the Spirit could only suffer through the interposing medium of the flesh, as the Spirit bound up with the flesh, or as the subject identical with the Son. Comparing the doctrine of Praxeas, as stated by Tertullian, with that of Callistus, as given by the author of the Philosophoumena, we find that the two completely coincide. Callistus appeared in Rome as a disciple of Cleomenes,[1] and Noetus under the Roman bishop Zephyrinus. Like Praxeas, Callistus affirmed that the Father and the Son were different only in name, but in themselves one, the indivisible Spirit; the Spirit that became flesh in the Virgin was not anything else than the Father, but one and the same. Therefore it was said in John xiv. 11, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" That which is seen as man is the Son: the Spirit, who has taken up his station in the Son, is the Father; for the Father and the Son are not two Gods, but one; for he who in him became the Father took the flesh, and through union with him made it God, and bound it to unity with him: the one God is called Father

[1] This Cleomenes himself was the disciple of a certain Epigonus, who τῇ Ῥώμῃ ἐπιδημήσας as the διάκονος καὶ μαθητὴς of Noetus of Smyrna ἐπίσπειρε τὴν ἄθεον γνώμην. Philos. ix. 7, p. 279.

and Son; this one person cannot be two, and so the Father suffered together with the Son.[1] The chief point is that not only are the Father and the Son identified, but God and Spirit are taken as simply identical conceptions. The Father and the Son, joined like spirit and flesh, and therefore without the connecting link of the Logos, meet in Jesus in unity of person.

Noetus of Smyrna, however, is better known than Praxeas. His historical significance is derived chiefly from the fact that he is the forerunner of Sabellius. Whatever classification of the monarchians be assumed, the guiding thought which is common to Noetus and Sabellius joins them closely together. This is not the doctrine of monotheism, but a philosophical view of the world, such as is usually denoted by the general name of pantheism. Those church writers—for instance, the author of the Philosophoumena—who not only derive everything heretical from Greek philosophy, but also think that every heresy must be referred to a particular philosophical system, consider the doctrine of Heraclitus and that of Noetus so closely allied, that they even call the second a pupil of the first. As Heraclitus regarded nature as the harmony of contraries, as the universal unity, in which, though in external appearance one thing ever stands opposed to another, all contraries are in fact removed and raised into unity; as he is said to have laid down concerning the universe, that it is both subject to and exempt from destruction, that it is both originated and unoriginated, both mortal and immortal;[2]—so Noetus is said to have

[1] Philos. ix. 12, p. 289. *οὕτως τὸν πατέρα συμπεπονθέναι τῷ υἱῷ, οὐ γὰρ θέλει λέγειν τὸν πατέρα πεπονθέναι.* Tertullian says exactly the same of Praxeas. Cp. Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit, i. p. 251. Praxeas also appealed to John xiv. 11; Tert. adv. Prax. cap. 20.

[2] Philos. ix. 9, p. 280: *Ἡράκλειτος μὲν οὖν φησιν εἶναι τὸ πᾶν διαιρετὸν ἀδιαίρετον, γενητὸν ἀγένητον, θνητὸν ἀθάνατον, λόγον, αἰῶνα, πατέρα υἱόν, θεὸν δίκαιον.* These words are not literally found in any of the fragments hitherto known, though those given by Schleiermacher in his dissertation on Heraclitus (Nos. 38 and 51 Philos. und Vermischt. Schriften, ii. pp. 80 and 122) contain some similar expressions. But the word *φησίν*, often indefinitely used in the Philosoph., need not here be taken to indicate a literal quotation. The Philos. (ix. 10, p. 281) consider the essential part of the doctrine of Heraclitus to be, that he *ἐν ἴσῃ μοίρᾳ τίθεται καὶ τιμᾷ τὰ ἐμφανῆ τοῖς ἀφανέσιν, ὡς ἕν τι τὸ ἐμφανὲς καὶ τὸ ἀφανὲς*

thought it not illogical to hold, that the same subject unites in itself opposite determinations, that as the Father it is invisible, unoriginated, immortal, but as the Son the opposite of all this, that God as the Father and the Son is both the one and the other, when and how he will. Noetus based this assertion, apparently, on a conception of the world, according to which the one essence of God both goes forth into the ever-varying diverse multitude of phenomena, and out of it back again into himself. But the general view which underlay the teaching of Noetus, and perhaps that of Praxeas before him, is first presented plainly in the teaching of Sabellius.

For a correct conception of the doctrine of Sabellius (which Neander also has stated incorrectly in an essential point), the chief requisite is to grasp the meaning which, in distinction from his predecessors, he assigned to the Logos-idea. The peculiarity of Praxeas and Noetus is that they make God become Father of the Son without the interposing link of the Logos. Sabellius, in his development of the idea of the Trinity, on the other hand, not

ὁμολογουμένως ὑπάρχον. This is the chief point of contact between Heraclitus and Noetus. The doctrine of the latter is thus stated, Philos. p. 284: *ὅτε μὲν οὖν μὴ γεγένητο ὁ πατὴρ* (so long as the One had not yet become the Father of the Son) *δικαίως πατὴρ προσηγορεύτο* (he was rightly called the Father of the world). Cp. 283: *λέγουσι—ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Θεὸν εἶναι πάντων δημιουργὸν καὶ πατέρα, ὅτε δὲ ηὐδόκησεν γένεσιν ὑπομεῖναι, γεννηθεὶς ὁ υἱὸς ἐγένετο αὐτὸς ἑαυτοῦ οὐχ ἑτέρου. Οὕτως γὰρ δοκεῖ μοναρχίαν συνιστᾶν, ἓν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φάσκων ὑπάρχειν πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν—αὐτὸν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ, ὀνόματι μὲν πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καλούμενον κατὰ χρόνων τροπήν.* In this *τροπὴ χρόνων* is involved the fundamental view of the Sabellian *πρόσωπα.* In order to express the unity of the Father and the Son, of the Invisible and the Visible, in the strongest terms, the author of the Philos. adds also (284): *Τοῦτον πάθει ξύλου προσπαγέντα, καὶ ἑαυτῷ τὸ πνεῦμα παραδόντα, ἀποθανόντα καὶ μὴ ἀποθανόντα, καὶ ἑαυτὸν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστήσαντα, τὸν ἐν μνημείῳ ταφέντα καὶ λόγχῃ τρωθέντα, καὶ ἥλοις καταπαγέντα τοῦτον τὸν ὅλων Θεὸν καὶ πατέρα εἶναι λέγει Κλεομένης καὶ ὁ τούτων χόρος, Ἡρακλείτειον σκότος ἐπεισάγοντες πολλοῖς.* The distinguishing feature of the doctrine of Noetus, thus considered, would therefore be, that he predicated of the person of Jesus, regarded as a particular individual, that which was laid down by Heraclitus of the *πᾶν*, the whole of things, the world in general. While the doctrine thus worked out by Heraclitus, the unity of contraries, was quite defensible, Noetism only shows a phenomenon that often recurs in the history of Christology: viz., that when the universal has been substituted for the individual in the person of Jesus, this new subject is thought not to efface, but to maintain, and include, his personality.

only assumes the Logos-idea—now become an essential and determining part of the thought of the age—but even makes it his principle.[1] The characteristic of Sabellianism is first that it distinguishes a monad and a triad, and then the mode in which the former passes into the latter. The means of connection between them, the principle of motion, by which the monad passes into a triad, is the Logos. With Sabellius the Logos holds by no means his usual position. Usually he is represented as proceeding from the Father, in order to become the Son: with Sabellius he precedes the whole Trinity, and thus even the Father, as the first member of the triad, presupposes the Logos. For this very reason, since all which is, first enters on existence in the triad, the Logos is not here a self-subsistent being, but only the transition to being, being in the course of origination, the principle of creative motion.[2] The monas is the first and original principle, which is necessarily presupposed by everything originated, which is in itself, and, as simple unity, includes in itself all. The monad must be carefully distinguished from the Father; otherwise the proper point of view for observing Sabellianism will be completely missed. That which is hidden in the monad, as in unity, must come forth and be revealed. In this sense Sabellius spoke of a silent and a speaking, or an inactive and an active God. The speaking God

[1] The doctrine of Sabellius is the advance from the duad to the triad. Originally there was no difference between Sabellianism and Noetism. The *υἱοπάτωρ*, Son-Father, a term used to denote the former (Gieseler, K.-G. i. 1, p. 299) is Noetus's merely nominal distinction between the Father and the Son. We learn from the Philos. some personal details concerning Sabellius. Cp. Volkmar, Hippolytus und die römischen Zeitgenossen; Zürich, 1855, p. 122.

[2] The most remarkable point of contact between Heraclitus on the one hand, and Noetus and Sabellius on the other, is the conception of the Logos. What the Logos is with Sabellius, as the moving creative principle, that is with Heraclitus the *διὰ πάντων διήκων λόγος*, the all-pervading law of reason, whose essence-matter and true significance is the law of contraries, the identity of being and not-being, as it subsists in a process of movement which continually changes into the absolute contrary of these its two factors, and, doing so, ever remains identical with itself,—which movement forms the idea of becoming. This is in accordance with Lassalle's definition of the Heraclitean Logos. Die Philosophie Herakleitos, des Dunkeln, von Ephesus; Berlin, 1858, vol. i. p. 322 *sq.*; cp. pp. 281, 259; vol. ii. p. 263 *sq.*

can only be the Logos in his relation to the Monad; but Sabellius's meaning would be quite perverted if his Logos were taken to signify merely the creative word sent forth in one single utterance. On the contrary, as he said of the God who is in himself, who is in substance one and the same, but assumes different forms as different occasions require, that he at one time expresses himself (*διαλέγεσθαι*) as the Father, at another as the Son, at another as the Holy Spirit,[1] it is clear that he did not understand by the Logos the mere act of creation; but that he regarded the whole process of world-development, running its course in the three forms of his idea of the Trinity, as one and the same Logos, as a continuous speech, as a divine dialectic activity which passes through different successive stages. As, then, the Logos is the principle of the origination and development of the world, so the God who is immanent in the world first attains real existence in the world. The world-development is the Trinitarian process, in which the God who is essentially one shows himself forth as Father, Son, and Spirit, appearing in the concrete reality of his being in these three determinate forms, constituting so many stages in the course of the universe.

This is the conception of *πρόσωπα*. The immanent relation of God and the world, Sabellius's fundamental view, is here observable; the three *πρόσωπα* can only be conceived as successive, not as simultaneous. As the world undergoes change and takes a different character from one period to another, so does God likewise in each period assume a different countenance, as it were altering his form, and showing himself forth as Father, Son, and Spirit, ever varying in the determinations of his personality. Each *πρόσωπον* is a different *διαλέγεσθαι*, and the three *πρόσωπα* together are, therefore, only the conception of the Logos unfolding and declaring itself. With regard to the several *πρόσωπα*, it is very characteristic of Sabellius's mode of view that (as it is

[1] Basilius (Ep. 210) brings out the specially characteristic element of Sabellius's doctrine:—*τὸν αὐτὸν θεὸν ἕνα τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ ὄντα, πρὸς τὰς ἑκάστοτε παραπιπτούσας χρείας μεταμορφούμενον, νῦν μὲν ὡς πατέρα, νῦν δὲ ὡς υἱὸν, νῦν δὲ ὡς πνεῦμα ἅγιον διαλέγεσθαι*, citing these as the words of Sabellius himself.

expressly stated[1]) he did not ascribe the creation, but only the giving of the law, to the Father. Since it is through the Logos alone that the silent God progresses to speech, the creation, as the transition from being to becoming, as the beginning of the divine activity whose object is the world, can only belong to the Logos-conception. When the world exists, and not till then, the series of πρόσωπα which form the Trias can unfold itself. The first period or phase of the world's history, viz., that of the Old Testament, is the πρόσωπον of the Father. In the second period the same God appears in the person of the Son. He was discerned in the first as the Father and the Lawgiver; it is now the incarnation of the Logos that gives this epoch its peculiar character. We might perhaps infer that the Logos stands in another and more immediate relation to the πρόσωπον of the Son than to the two other πρόσωπα. He is, however, in the πρόσωπον of the Father, the same working principle: the law-giving of the Father and the incarnation of the Son are alike his work: in the one, as in the other, the Logos assumes a part in the development of history; nothing but the form under which he appears is changed. The same is the case with the third πρόσωπον. The divine-human unity, which shows itself forth in the incarnate Logos as in the one individual with whom the Logos has combined himself in personal unity,—this divine-human unity, in the third πρόσωπον, as the form of the Holy Spirit, is manifested in the whole multitude of the faithful or spiritual: each of these is relatively that which the Son, as the one God-man, is absolutely. God, in this series of πρόσωπα, the various phases of his revelation, joins himself more and more closely to the world and humanity. Accordingly, the third πρόσωπον, in which, in the form of the Holy Spirit, God unites himself with men, and each individual is severally conscious of his unity with God, is not only the most universal, but the most intense and unqualified interpenetration of the divine and human. Here, too, the working principle is the Logos as the

[1] According to Theodoret, Haer. fab. ii. 9, Sabellius ascribed to the Father in the Old Testament only the νομοθετῆσαι.

speaking God. As, in the πρόσωπον of the Son, he is man in the one individual, so in the third πρόσωπον he individualises himself in the infinitely manifold variety of single subjects. The whole process of the revelation and unfolding of the divine essence, immanent in the world, is finally completed when the Logos goes back into God, as he had come forth from him. From the whole structure of Sabellius's theory, we should certainly be led to suppose, even were it not expressly attested, that he affirmed a final return of the Logos, in which all reaches its end. Since his fundamental idea is thus the process in which the essence of God expands and again contracts itself, the ancient doctors, for instance Athanasius,[1] thought that the source of his doctrine was to be found in the Stoic philosophy. In affirming this, they spoke with the same degree of justice with which they referred Noetism and Sabellianism to the philosophy of Heraclitus. For the Stoic and the Heraclitean doctrines stand in a relation of the closest affinity; and from the latter especially came the idea of a process which passes into opposing antithesis and receives everything back, out of antithesis, into unity of principle, or moves between being and becoming, unity and duality, expansion and contraction, etc. This ancient conception of the world became very widely spread, and meets us also in other Christian writings of this age.[2]

This school of Monarchians, if their doctrine is followed out to the point where its essential tendency becomes most clearly discernible, can only be styled pantheistic. It is this that distinguishes them from another school, who, though they also rejected a hypostatic Trinity in the sense of the Catholic doctors, otherwise took a different direction. From a pantheistic point of view, only the divine element of Christ can be regarded as the substance of his person; the divine manifests itself in the human element, but the latter is a mere accident of the former. The opposite standpoint was, that the human was regarded as the

[1] Orat. c. Ar. iv. 13. Cf. Greg. Naz. Or. i. ed. Par. 1619, i. 16.

[2] In the pseudo-Clementine Homilies; in the Apocryphal Gospel of the Egyptians. Cp. Schneckenburger, über das Ev. der Aegyptier, 1834, pp. 3, 8.

substance, and the divinity which forms a part of the conception of Christ's person, added to it only as something secondary and subordinate. This was done by the second school of Monarchians. The ancient doctors denoted their opinions by the characteristic expression that they taught a Christ κάτωθεν; *i.e.* a Christ who comes from below, being essentially a mere man, and only possessing divinity in so far as his divinity enters into union with his essentially human personality.[1]

Theodotus of Byzantium and Artemon stand at the head of this school. They considered Jesus to be an ordinary man, but supposed that he was begotten supernaturally, and that the Holy Spirit further descended specially upon him at the baptism. They were thus in exact accordance with the doctrine of the first three Gospels concerning Christ; and they also maintained firmly the points which distinguish this doctrine from the Johannine Logos-theology. But what makes their appearance in the Roman Church especially remarkable is, that it marks the crisis which now took place in Christological thought. The Artemonites (according to the account which Eusebius[2] takes from a work of one of their opponents), asserted that till the time of the Roman bishop Victor, the doctrine which they taught had been received in the Church of Rome as delivered by the apostles, and that it first suffered corruption under Victor's successor, Zephyrinus. The doctrine since prevalent, that Christ's nature was divine in itself, had, according to them, but recently arisen. We need only cast our eyes back on the stages through which the dogma of the person of Christ had passed up to this time, and realise what the point was, which was now chiefly in question, and we shall soon be convinced that the common opinion, which regards this as a groundless allegation, is mistaken. That Christ's person was divine in itself was not a firmly established view, so long as the conception of the Logos

[1] Cp. Euseb. Ec. Hist. v. 28, where it is said of the Artemonites, they are τὸν ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενον ἀγνοοῦντες; and, vii. 30, of Paul of Samosata, λέγει Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν κάτωθεν.

[2] Ec. Hist. v. 28.

was not yet assigned to Christ's person as a standing predicate. If we bear this in mind, we must ask, Were not the Artemonites right when they said that the doctrine of the Logos had only lately arisen? A new proof of the unfixed, uncertain condition of Christology in the first decades of the third century is afforded by the work that we have so often mentioned, the Philosophoumena. The author, as we may gather from his own statements, took a very lively part in these controversies, and the doctrine of a personal Logos, which he supported, was still met by the charge of placing a second God by the side of the one God.[1] And even admitting that Victor expelled Theodotus from the communion of the Church on account of his doctrine, still the doctrine of the Logos was so far from universal acceptance, that not only Callistus, the most important member of those Monarchians, afterwards became Bishop of Rome, but his predecessor Zephyrinus, Victor's successor, also shared the same views. Nevertheless, it is the time of Zephyrinus which makes an epoch in this subject. For nothing else than the energy with which, even under Zephyrinus, opponents of Monarchianism, as the author of the Philosophoumena, insisted on the claims of the opposite doctrine, can have been the cause that procured it from that time an ever more and more decisive ascendency.[2]

[1] Cp. Philos. ix. 11 *sq.*, p. 284. They are called δίθεοι by their opponents, the author says. Οὐ γὰρ, says Callistus against them, p. 289, ἐρῶ δύο θεοὺς, πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν, ἀλλ' ἕνα. On the author's doctrine of the Logos, cp. Philos. x. 33, p. 334 *sq.*

[2] The subject of the preceding paragraphs requires a more minute discussion. The trustworthiness of the author of the Philos. has been much contested in the Catholic interest. Whether the author of the Refutation of Heresies was the Roman presbyter Caius, as I have maintained in special opposition to Bunsen, or, as is now commonly supposed, the Bishop Hippolytus; in any case he was a very eminent party-leader, belonging to the Roman Church, and a writer whose account, if it may be taken as true, gives us a very clear idea of the position of dogma in the Roman Church at the beginning of the third century. Döllinger having maintained (Hippolytus und Kallistus, oder die römische Kirche in der ersten Hälfte des dritten Jahrhunderts, Regensb. 1853, p. 232 *sq.*) that Hippolytus in his Philosophoumena has admitted unmistakable contradictions and inaccuracies into his statement of the doctrine of Callistus, I have tried to show (Theol. Jahrb. 1854, Cajus und Hippolytus, p. 358 *sq.*) that this is

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Beryllus, the bishop of Bostra, in Arabia, must be reckoned not among the first, but the second class of Monarchians. This point has now been placed beyond doubt by thorough discussion. He denied the personal pre-existence of Christ (*κατ' ἰδίαν οὐσίας περιγραφήν*), and the essential divinity of his nature; his great

not the case, but that Döllinger himself gives an incorrect explanation of the passages in question. Against this D. Kuhn (Theol. Quartalschrift, 1855, p. 343 *sq.*; die theologischen Streitigkeiten in der römischen Kirche und die Lehre derselben in der ersten Hälfte des dritten Jahrhunderts) has warmly defended Döllinger's position, and emphatically returned on me the charge of erroneous interpretation. Since Callistus was the bishop of Rome, it certainly would, thinks Kuhn, be interesting, if nothing else, to ascertain that he was a Sabellian, as I have described him. "But why make him, the Pope of Rome, a present of Theodotianism? For this is also to be ascribed to him, according to Hippolytus; and thus we find he is a double heretic! There is, we say, only this alternative: either he is both, or he is neither. The decision is not hard to find—did the passionate opponent of Callistus know and write pure truth, or is his statement one-sided, prejudiced, coloured by partiality?"

I reply, he knew and wrote the truth: Callistus is not only doubly, but triply a heretic,—not only a Sabellian and Theodotian, but also a Noetian; and it is only by taking all this into consideration that we can correctly understand the controversies of this time. The author of the Philosophoumena states most directly (cf. ix. 7, 10, pp. 279, 284) that Callistus was an adherent of the dogma which was promulgated by Noetus at Smyrna, and was introduced into Rome by Epigonus and Cleomenes during the bishopric of Zephyrinus. Such being his primary position, it was quite possible for him to be a Theodotian as well as a Sabellian with regard to the controversy upon the proper definition of the unity and distinction of the Father and the Son. The difference between the doctrine of Noetus and that of Theodotus is, that while Noetus simply laid down the unity of the Father and the Son, and did not attempt to determine its nature, merely saying, that what the one is visibly, the other is invisibly,—Theodotus effected the unity of the two by means of the conception of the Spirit. According to the author of the Philosophoumena (vii. 35, p. 258), Theodotus taught that at the baptism in Jordan, Christ descended on the man Jesus in the form of a dove, and that no divine element worked in him before *ἢ ὥστε κατελθὸν ἀνεδείχθη ἐν αὐτῷ το πνεῦμα, ὃ εἶναι τὸν Χριστὸν προσαγορεύει.* The conception of the Spirit was adopted by Callistus into his scheme, in order to add it to the doctrine of Noetus, and apply it to determine the relation of the Father and the Son; the two were one, as the *πνεῦμα ἀδιαίρετον καὶ τὰ πάντα γέμειν τοῦ θείου πνεύματος, τά τε ἄνω καὶ κάτω* (in analogy to the statement of Heraclitus, that all is full of souls and demons: cp. Lassalle, i. p. 275), *καὶ εἶναι τὸ ἐν τῇ παρθενῷ σαρκωθὲν πνεῦμα οὐχ ἕτερον παρὰ τὸν πατέρα*, etc. In strict language, no doubt, it should be said that this view is known to us under the name of Praxeas; still, inasmuch as its principal conception is the *πνεῦμα*, an opponent might also style it the doctrine of Theodotus. When it is said that Callistus was not only

object was at once to maintain that his personality was essentially human, and to determine the proper mode of conceiving the divinity which, while it is ascribed to Christ, reposes on his humanity as its basis. Though he did not admit Christ's pre-human existence, he asserted that he had been predetermined

a Noetian and Theodotian, but also a Sabellian (Philos. ix. 12, p. 290), we have, doubtless, to explain this by the peculiar meaning which Sabellius gave to the Logos-idea. We must observe the position assigned by the Philosophoumena to Sabellius, whose historical significance becomes intimately known to us for the first time from this source. Callistus, we are told, p. 285, at one time spoke in the sense of the true doctrine, at another in a Sabellian sense; he further expelled Sabellius as one who might have led him into the right path. For Sabellius was not disinclined to receive the admonitions of the author of the Philosophoumena; but when he was alone with Callistus, he allowed himself to be drawn back by him into the dogma of Cleomenes. The author laid the greatest weight on the doctrine of a personally subsisting Logos, who is himself God (x. 33, p. 336). Sabellius agreed with him so far, in accepting the Logos-idea, but as a Monarchian he received it in a different sense. It may thus be said that Sabellius held a middle position between the two opposites; and Callistus, taking *πνεῦμα* and *λόγος* as identical, so far accorded with him. *Πνεῦμα γὰρ, φησὶν* (thus the heresy of Callistus is described, Philos. x. 27, p. 330), *ὁ Θεὸς οὐχ ἕτερόν ἐστι παρὰ τὸν λόγον ἢ ὁ λόγος παρὰ τὸν Θεὸν, ἕν οὖν τοῦτο πρόσωπον, ὀνόματι μὲν μεριζόμενον, οὐσίᾳ δὲ οὔ.* Cf. 289, where likewise it is stated that Callistus says, *τὸν λόγον αὐτὸν εἶναι υἱὸν, αὐτὸν καὶ πατέρα, ὀνόματι μὲν καλούμενον, ἕν δὲ ὄν, τὸ πνεῦμα ἀδιαίρετον.* Here, the author expressly observes, Callistus set up this heresy because he openly reproached them, the author's party, with being *δίθεοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ Σαβελλίου συχνῶς κατηγορεῖσθαι ὡς παραβάντος τὴν πρώτην πίστιν.* Because, then, he was blamed by Sabellius, who had advanced beyond his first faith, he set up his heresy. The *πρώτη πίστις* can only be the doctrine of Noetus, in which Callistus and Sabellius agreed; and the *παραβαίνειν* of Sabellius from his first opinion, his progressive elaboration of his doctrine as to the Logos; and accordingly Callistus, when he wished to defend himself against the reproof of the other, could only say, *τὸν λόγον αὐτὸν εἶναι υἱὸν*, etc. And yet it is asserted that he again broke with Sabellius, and even expelled him from Rome! This is the point on which Kuhn lays especial stress in his argument against me. Words (he says) are always much more easily misrepresented and distorted than actions, The fact (he proceeds) that Callistus took a middle position between Hippolytus and Sabellius is plainly apparent as the true kernel of the whole of Hippolytus's diatribe against him; this fact, equally indisputable and instructive, must not be overlooked; indeed, it is seen as the firmest point of certainty, and as the guiding clew in the midst of the labyrinth of the statements of Hippolytus. Therefore, among the other things in my dissertation that Kuhn does not understand, he cannot comprehend my styling Callistus a Sabellian, while I not only neglect to assign its true importance to the excommunication of

in the mind of God, and therefore had at least an ideal pre-existence. The divinity that was superadded to his human personality, he described by a term which certainly does not,

Sabellius by this same Callistus, but even omit to mention the fact altogether (p. 347). Now the expulsion of Sabellius is a fact, but the alleged middle position of Callistus is a mere presupposition. On the other hand, the motives which led Callistus to this action stand out so clearly in the statement of the Philosophoumena, that no further explanation is needed. If Callistus, before he was bishop, because it was his interest to procure the support of Sabellius, accommodated himself to the doctrine of the latter, what more natural than that, after he had reached his aim, he should discard Sabellius, and even expel him in order to create a favourable impression with the opposite party? Philos. ix. 12, p. 288: *νομίζων δὲ τετυχηκέναι οὗ ἐθηρᾶτο, τὸν Σαβέλλιον ἀπέωσεν ὡς μὴ φρονοῦντα ὀρθῶς*, etc. All this shows plainly enough how doubtful and unfixed the doctrine of the Trinity still was at this time in the Roman Church, and how thoroughly therefore the above-mentioned assertion of the heretics, that, till the time of Bishop Zephyrinus, Monarchianism was the received and prevalent doctrine at Rome, is confirmed by the whole delineation of the circumstances of the Roman Church contained in the Philosophoumena. In my Geschichte der Trinitätslehre, i. p. 279, I had already maintained the truth, in all essential points, of this assertion of the Monarchians; and D. Gieseler (in a dissertation on Hippolytus, die ersten Monarchianer und die römische Kirche in der ersten Hälfte des dritten Jahrh., Theol. Stud. u. Krit. 1853, p. 767 *sq.*), has now adopted the same view. Whatever forms Monarchianism assumed, its chief antithesis was always (though Kuhn in his dissertation, where he presupposes that the doctrine of Callistus was purely orthodox and Nicene, pays no regard to this fact) that form of the doctrine of the Logos which found its most resolute champion in the author of the Philosophoumena. Thus, in a history of the doctrine of the Trinity, we must assign to this writer as important a position in the Church of Rome as to Tertullian in that of Africa: and, in fact, the assertion of the heretics coincides with that which we find in Tertullian's polemic against the Monarchian Praxeas (c. 3):—Simplices quique, ne dixerim imprudentes et idiotae, quae major semper credentium pars est, quoniam et ipsa regula fidei a pluribus diis seculi ad unicum et verum deum transfert, non intelligentes, unicum quidem, sed cum sua *οἰκονομίᾳ* esse credendum, expavescunt ad *οἰκονομίαν*. Numerum et dispositionem trinitatis divisionem praesumunt unitatis, quando unitas ex semet ipsa derivans trinitatem non destruatur ab illa sed administretur. Itaque duos et tres jam jactitant a nobis praedicari; se vero unius dei cultores praesumunt, quasi non et unitas irrationaliter collecta haeresim faciat, et trinitas rationaliter expensa veritatem constituat. Here the circumstances of the dispute are exactly the same as in the Philosophoumena. The great majority of believers merely insist on the opposition to heathen polytheism, and accordingly refuse to listen to the doctrine of the Logos. This doctrine has yet to make its way; but its adherents apprehend that it expresses the deeper and more concrete significance of Christianity: hence its connection with Montanism, and the greater moral earnestness which distinguishes the author of the Philosophoumena from Callistus.

point to the idea of emanation, but can only be understood of a free spiritual agency of God, resting on moral unity.[1]

It should be observed what prominence the doctrine of Beryllus gives to the conception of personality, the being *κατ' ἰδίαν οὐσίας περιγραφήν*; personal being, a being circumscribed, limited, and marked off in its own separate independence. This points to the great significance of this conception for determining the relation of the divine and human elements in the person of Christ: and here is the point of transition from Beryllus to Paul of Samosata. These two Monarchians stand in the same relation to one another as Noetus and Sabellius. The Christology of Paul correlates exactly with that of Sabellius. The two Christologies represent alike characteristically the standpoint of the two Monarchian schools: and as the views of Sabellius, with reference to their general character, can only be termed pantheistic, so those of Paul must be called theistic, if we use these words as they are applied when we say generally that the pantheistic and the theistic theories are essentially opposed. From the point of view of Sabellius, the human element in its union with the divine is but the manifestation of the latter. The tendency of Paul's doctrine, on the other hand, is to keep the human and the divine as separate as possible, and to present God and the man Jesus as two equally personal self-subsisting subjects confronting one another. Like Theodotus and Artemon, Paul started from the assumption that Christ, though supernaturally begotten, is in himself a mere man: but he carried on the development of this theory to a further stage, in that he was the first to speak of a Christ who had become God (*τεθεοποιῆσθαι*). If Christ is not God by his own nature, then he was not, but became, that which he is as a divine being: and how did he become such? The material means by which, according to Theodotus, the divine was imparted to Jesus—viz., the descent of the Holy Spirit at his baptism,—could not satisfy Paul. In the moral element alone could the divine and human in Christ be bound together in unity.

[1] The term *ἐμπολιτεύεσθαι*, taken from political and social life, is used of the existence of the Father in the Son. Euseb. E. H. vi. 33.

By the way of moral endeavour and progress towards moral perfection alone did Christ, while being a man, as in himself he is, become God and a Son of God. But again, this moral element, if it is to be regarded as the means of raising the human to the divine, cannot be conceived as purely human and separate from all divine co-operation. Here then is the point at which Paul availed himself of the idea of the Logos—now not to be omitted in any system of doctrine. But in order to prevent any admission of a personal Logos, he would not apply the conception to Christ without defining the proper nature of the Logos as existing in God. The Logos in God is that which he is also in man, the inward spiritual principle of thought and self-consciousness. God is, in his Logos, God personal and self-conscious; as the Logos is in man the inward man or the principle of his personality. It is only then in inseparable unity with God that the Logos is what he is: and he can no more have a personal existence external to God than he can sunder himself from this unity. Holding then that the Logos wrought and dwelt in the man Jesus, Paul nevertheless admitted here no unity of God and man in substance, but merely a divine agency, enhancing the human powers of the will and understanding. There can be no question here of a unity of God and man. On the contrary, we have before us two personally distinct subjects: the whole mode of thought is dualistic, and its chief aim is to keep the divine and human elements apart in their essential distinction.

The warm feeling which Paul's doctrine aroused against him, and which did not rest till the sentence of condemnation had been pronounced on the doctrine, and the author thrust out of his see at Antioch,—the malignant reproaches which were cast on his character, connecting his insistance on the human element in Christ's person with vile and worldly inclinations,—the whole Church opposition that rose against him,—all this amply shows how thoroughly Christians were now accustomed to regard the dogma of Christ's pre-human personality as a part of orthodoxy. The last of the synods that were held in reference to this matter,

that of Antioch in the year 269, was in many respects a prelude of the Nicene Council. It is remarkable, however, that the same word which was afterwards used to sum up Nicene orthodoxy, now fell under the condemnation of the fathers of Antioch. They expressly declared that the Son of God is not ὁμοούσιος with the Father. According to Athanasius,[1]—who could not deem the fathers of Antioch less orthodox than those of Nice, and for this reason suffered not the contradiction to disturb his reliance on Church tradition,—the reason for this declaration was that it was the simplest method of rejecting the dialectical arguments of the Samosatene. Paul argued thus according to Athanasius:—if it was not granted that Christ was by nature a mere man, he must be of like substance with the Father: but if the Father and Son stood side by side as ὁμοούσιοι, then above them both another existing οὐσία, as the unity to which they are alike subordinated, must be presupposed. The doctrine of the Antiochian fathers, that Christ was by nature God, would thus lead to the assertion—inadmissible in itself—that the Father was not the highest and the absolute God.[2] This conclusion, leading directly to Sabellianism, could only be avoided (it was thought) by the denial of the Homoousia.

At this point of the development of the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ, there were still very various and sharply-contrasted

[1] De Syn. Arim. et Sel. c. 45.

[2] Μία προηγουμένη οὐσία with two other οὐσίαι, its emanations (Athanas.). If we press the idea of Homoousia to such a degree as to make the Father and the Son two completely co-ordinate essences, there must stand above them both another οὐσία, whose emanations they both are. The clearest statement of this point is given by Athanasius, de Syn. c. 51, where he argues against those who say μὴ χρῆναι λέγειν ὁμοούσιον τὸν υἱὸν τῷ πατρὶ, ὅτι ὁ λέγων ὁμοούσιον τρία λέγει, οὐσίαν τινὰ προυποκειμένην, καὶ τοὺς ἐκ ταύτης γεννωμένους ὁμοουσίους εἶναι, καὶ ἐπιλέγουσιν, ἐὰν οὖν ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοούσιος ᾖ τῷ πατρὶ, ἀνάγκη προυποκεῖσθαι αὐτῶν οὐσίαν, ἐξ ἧς καὶ ἐγεννήθησαν, καὶ μὴ εἶναι τὸν μὲν πατέρα, τὸν δὲ υἱὸν, ἀλλ' ἀμφοτέρους ἀδελφούς. The conception against which Paul directs his arguments is in essence the same as that of Sabellius. In Sabellius's system, the Father stood on a level with the Son and the Spirit, and above them all was placed the μονὰς, the μία προηγουμένη οὐσία, or the highest God. It is uncertain, however, whether Sabellius used the term ὁμοούσιος to characterise the co-ordinate relation of his three πρόσωπα.

ideas on the subject in men's minds. The most decided tendency of all was a rejection of the view which made the divine so much less conspicuous and essential than the human element of Christ's person, that Christ could only be regarded as essentially human. The opposite opinion, proceeding from the idea of God, though it granted that Christ was substantially divine, yet deemed him but a transitory manifestation, showing forth a particular phase of the one divine essence. But neither could this satisfy the Christian consciousness. The dignity of Christ seemed to require that he should have existed as a personal divine essence before his human appearance on earth. But this supposition too was met by difficulties not easily to be surmounted. Not only did it conflict with the idea of the unity of God: even were this disregarded in spite of the Monarchian resistance, yet doubt seemed to be cast on Christ's dignity by the very belief that was thought most indispensable. For when the Son of God, or the Logos, could only be conceived in his personal subsistence as a being who had proceeded forth from God in a definite movement, not only were temporal change and material affection imported into the being of God, according to the fashion of the Gnostic emanations, but the doubt inevitably arose, whether he who had thus originated, who stood so deeply below the one highest God, could be rightly considered as essentially divine. If we bring together in one view all the active tendencies thus resulting from the previous development of the doctrine in question, we shall place ourselves at the point at which Origen stood when he took up the task presented to theology, and led on theological speculation to a further stage.

In the doctrine of Origen we see a new and most important force contributing to shape the gradual growth of dogma. We may distinguish in it two essentially related sides. On the one side, Origen regarded it as a truth certain above all else, that the Son could only be a being personally distinct from the Father, and self-subsisting. But if he is not a mere power and property of God: if, therefore, he exists not in God, but without God: he must, as thus distinguished from God, bear a dependent and sub-

ordinate relation to him. Ascribing the highest importance to the absoluteness of the idea of God, Origen could not admit that over against the Father, as the absolute God, there stood another not less absolute being in the person of the Son. If, then, the full reality of the conception of the Son involves the conclusion that he is a special hypostasis, still his subordination to the Father is a not less essentially determining notion; and Origen, therefore, did not hesitate to describe the Son, by comparison with the Father, as a far inferior being in every respect. Thus he would affirm absolute goodness of the Father alone, not of the Son, and confine the agency of the Son to the reasonable or logical element, subordinating it to the universal agency of the Father. But the wider the gulf which this precisely determined distinction created between the Father and the Son, the more earnestly, on the other side, did Origen seek to fill up the chasm. However far the Son stands below the Father, however impossible it is from the nature of the case that he should equal the absolute essence of the Father, yet in one point he partakes of the same absoluteness. For, although begotten, yet it is not in time, at a definite moment before the creation of the world, that he was begotten. He was begotten from eternity: his existence, in respect of time, is as truly without a beginning, as absolutely eternal, as that of the Father. This is the principal conception round which Origen's whole doctrine of the relation of the Father and the Son revolves. By means of the idea of the Son's co-equal eternity with the Father, the Son was to be placed in a relation to the Father that should answer to the absolute essence of God; all emanationist ideas were to be kept apart from the notion of God, the subordination of the Son on the one side was to be counterbalanced on the other, finite and infinite were to be bound together in unity. The absolute essence of God was a sufficient ground for an eternal process of creation, and for the eternal generation of the Son. Since it is impossible to conceive a time before which God was not, but wherein he first became that which belongs to his absolute essence, he must have been from eternity both the creator of a

world and the Father of a Son. If he is the All-ruler, then that, in respect of which he is the All-ruler, must also always have existed. Again, there can have been no beginning of his Fatherhood; for it is not with him as with human fathers; no obstacle can be conceived that could keep back or delay his Fatherhood. For if God is always perfect, and always has the power to be a Father, and it is good that he should be the Father of such a Son, what could prevent him from actually being such? If the eternity of the Son is thus based on the absolute perfection of the divine essence, everything which, according to common modes of thought, gives the generation of the Son too close an analogy to a mere natural process, at once disappears. Origen could only conceive it as an extra-temporal divine act not to be brought under any category of human thought; since it was utterly inconsistent with the idea of God to suppose that an element, changeable in time and corporeally divisible, was included in his essence.

But though Origen thus sought to strip the idea of generation of all positive determinations, and to grasp it in the highest possible abstraction, still for all his pains there pressed on him a question destined afterwards to divide the different views of the relation of the Father and the Son by a very sharply-defined contrast. Was the Son begotten from the substance of the Father, or evoked and brought forth by an act of God's will? Origen did not throw the question into a determinate form; but it is clearly the cause of his continual oscillation between these two statements. True, he ascribes to the Son a community of substance with the Father, uses the term ὁμοούσιος, even says that the Son is begotten out of the Father's substance, and compares him to an efflux, a radiation of light. But again, in the same connection, he speaks not of the substance, but of the will of the Father; and though he here speaks only analogically, and only admits that the Son is begotten by the Father as the will is sent forth from the spirit, without sundering it, or being sundered from it, still he says directly, in reference to the Son, that the Father's will suffices to call forth whatsoever he will; that the hypostasis of the Son is

begotten by the mere means of his will.[1] Thus we see him expressly declaring that the will of the Father is the principle of the Son's subsistence; and if we further consider all his teaching with respect to the distinction of the Son from the Father,—his difference of being, his subordination, the great inferiority of his dignity and agency,—we can hardly disagree with those who regarded him as a chief authority for Arian doctrine, and even called him the father of Arianism. Nevertheless, all his disparagement of the Son in respect of his subordination to the Father, was in turn compensated by the exalted attribute of eternity; an attribute which no doctor before him had assigned to the Son with such a full sense of its speculative significance.

Thus considered, Origen marks a momentous turning-point in the history of dogma. The two tendencies which, from the commencement of Christian dogma, proceeded side by side in parallel courses, both alike authorised by the Christian consciousness—the one seeking to place the Son on an equality with the Father, and to identify them in unity of essence; the other to distinguish the two, and to bring the one into definite subordination to the other —are here united, and each invested with the same importance. But instead of again running parallel, from this point they diverge more and more, until their separation has been carried to its utmost width, and an adjustment became necessary. After Origen's time, the development of dogma advanced rapidly to this consummation.

Of the two sides of Origen's system, that which laid especial stress on the distinction and separation of the Son from the Father was adopted, in a more or less decided form, by his disciples and successors. Among these, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, holds especial prominence, as representing a doctrine very generally received. The fragmentary statements of the ancient writers do

[1] Confirmatory passages are cited in my Trinitäts-Lehre, i. 196 *sq.*, and in Redepenning's Origenes, ii. 293 *sq.* When Redepenning finds fault with me (p. 302) for speaking of Origen as wavering with respect to the generation of the Son, he seems to me to have given insufficient consideration to the expressions of Origen which he himself quotes.

not permit a closer determination of their views. But as they repeated the established comparisons afforded by the idea of emanation, termed the Son a creature, and were regarded with much repugnance by the later orthodox doctors, it is very probable that they did not maintain the principal point of the doctrine of Origen, the eternity of the Son. Dionysius of Alexandria is said to have expressly denied the eternity of the Son, and to have come so near to Arianism as already to use the formula ἦν ποτε, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, and to put forward a subordination-theory. The most offensive expressions of his theory, however, he afterwards thought fit to soften: several Sabellianistically-affected Libyan bishops having brought a complaint against their Alexandrian bishop to the Roman bishop Dionysius, the latter, in answer to this complaint, sent forth a synodal epistle, directed both against Sabellianism and Tritheism. In this document he affirmed a divine Triad, consistent and closely combined, however, with the monarchy of God. Though he thus approached very near to the Nicene doctrine, he yet left the opposing ideas simply stated, without any link of connection between them.[1] This state of uncertainty, in which the two ideas acted and reacted on one another, and neither could permanently gain a firmer position than the other, was only terminated by the Arian controversy.

The characteristic quality of Arianism, by reason of which it marks an epoch, is, that in it the disagreement of the two conflicting modes of view—still so different, and coming into such constant and varied contact with each other, is expressed for the first time with regard to one solid and tangible point of debate;

[1] It is merely in appearance, as D. Kuhn (p. 386 *sq.*) has correctly shown, that Dionysius, in the fragment in Athanasius de decr. Syn. Nic. c. 26, speaks of three distinct views, the Sabellian, the Tritheistic, and that of Dionysius of Alexandria. There are, in fact, only two against which Dionysius declares himself. The Tritheistic view is the same as that of Dionysius of Alexandria, who is charged both with separating the unity of God into three Godheads, and with saying that the Son is a creature, and was not from the first, but came into being. Cp. Athanas. de sent. Dion. c. 13: here also it is only said that Dionysius of Rome wrote against two opinions, the Sabellian and that which resembled Arianism.

in it, for the first time, they are referred to an antithesis which is clearly and definitely proclaimed, and steadily adhered to. If the Son in his prehuman existence could not be conceived as a being personally distinct from the Father (as it was required to conceive him) without being regarded as a being far inferior to the Father, dependent on and subordinate to him, then it became needful to determine precisely upon what cardinal point the whole distinction between these two beings ultimately turned. Supposing that the Son, although originated, was yet begotten from the substance of the Father, and in substance the same as the Father, how could he nevertheless be placed so far below him? Whatever determinations of the relation of the Father and the Son might be offered remained vague and uncertain, so long as it was not first attempted to answer the inquiry—What was the absolute principle of their distinction? According to the ancient doctors, Arianism had a marked tendency to dialectic, and from the standpoint of the Church of course it was impossible not to blame the Arians for trying to base their theory chiefly on dialectic, and therefore addressing themselves so earnestly and exclusively to the dialectical method. But this charge points to those characteristic qualities of Arianism, without which it could never have gained such historical significance,—its methodical procedure, its adherence to definiteness of conception, and boldness in accepting legitimate conclusions.

Arianism then from the first, in the person of its founder, the Alexandrian presbyter Arius, felt itself forced to undertake the problem of a searching inquiry into the true nature of the relation of the Father and the Son, and the principle of the distinction between them. But what final solution of the question could be reached if the Son had already received the attribute of eternity, so that even the conception of generation was no obstacle to his being deemed, in the infinite duration of his existence, a not less absolute being than the Father? Still, however completely the Son was made equal with the Father, however thoroughly all points of distinction were cast away, there remained one attribute

which, since the Son could in no wise share it with the Father, separated him absolutely from the Father: the Father was not begotten. Starting from this point, Arianism worked out its tenets in strict logical consistency. The Father alone is unbegotten; herein consists his absolute essence. The Son, since he is not unbegotten like the Father, but, as being the Son, is begotten, cannot be of like substance with the Father, but must be in substance different. He is therefore not begotten from the essence of the Father; he is, in fact, not begotten at all; he is made. Further, since, if he is not begotten from the substance of the Father, there is nothing out of which he could be made, it can only be said that he is made out of nothing. If he were of the substance of the Father, and therefore in substance the same as the Father, then there would be two alike unbegotten, or equally absolute beings; but this is a contradiction. Again, if the Son is made out of nothing, and if accordingly it may be said of him that he originated, then his being had a beginning; and though his transition from not-being to being be conceived as abstractly as possible, it can only be said that once he was not. If the Son had not originated; if, on the contrary, he were eternal, then he would be of the same eternity with the Father; but the Father is eternal only because he is unbegotten. When these two propositions, each equally characteristic of Arianism—the Son is ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, and ἦν ποτε, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν—have been laid down, the Son is separated from the Father by so vast a gulf, that he can belong to no other class than that of creatures. But yet he stands above them, and for this reason: though a creature himself, he is yet the creator of creatures; though he has originated, yet he did not originate in time, but before time; time itself came into being through him. On the other hand, though Arius, having regard to such considerations, called him God, God in the full sense of the word, the absolute distinction between him and the Father could by no means be thereby effaced. Thus the general aspect under which Arius regarded the relation of the Father and the Son was the antithesis of finite and infinite. As

the finite and the infinite are simply contrary, so between the Father and the Son there can be no mediating link of connection; and therefore Arius repudiated most decidedly all physical analogies and emanational ideas. If the Father and the Son have nothing in common as regards their substance, the principle of the Son's existence cannot be sought in the substance, but only in the will of the Father. He is through the mere will of the Father, as all else that is without God has been made by the act of his will.

The opponents of Arianism could at first raise no effective objection against this chain of argument. They only insisted that if there is the same distinction, the same antithesis between the Father and the Son as between finite and infinite, then the Son must resign whatever divine attributes Arius, out of a wish to raise him above other things that are made, still permitted him to retain. They justly asked whether it were not a contradiction that the Son, himself merely a creature, should be also the creator of creatures; and though he had himself originated, and was conditioned in respect of his commencement by the category of time, should, as the creator of time, stand above all time. The consequences of Arianism went still further: the antithesis of finite and infinite must be still more strictly followed out, and the final result would be, that the Son, as a simply finite being, could lay no claim whatever to be considered divine.

But such objections availed nothing, so long as the system which denied the divinity of the Son was not opposed by another resting on positive foundations. If this was to be done, some point must be discovered in the Arian reasoning which would render a logical resistance to the conclusions possible. Now the Arians, arguing from the conception of God as an unbegotten being, assumed that to be unbegotten was to be eternal; that the two conceptions were in fact identical. This their opponents could not admit without being also prepared to surrender all that constituted the intimate connection of the Son with the substance of the Father. If then he was not to be degraded by the logic of

the Arian arguments to simple finiteness, eternity of being must above all be ascribed to him. But since, as the Son, he can only be begotten, not unbegotten, this could not be done unless some medium were discovered between finite and infinite, which should be both at once naturally infinite and naturally finite. The want was satisfied by the conception of the eternal generation of the Son, as affirmed by the anti-Arians. The Son, as begotten, derives his existence from another, and therefore, like all that does not contain the cause of its being in itself, must belong to the category of the finite. But inasmuch as he is begotten from eternity, the finiteness, the dependence, the conditioned nature of his substance disappear (it is supposed) in the eternity of his being.

While then Arianism defines the relation of the Father and the Son by the abstract antithesis of two mutual exclusives, finite and infinite, according to the opposite doctrine it is precisely the unity of finite and infinite in the Son that forms the characteristic idea of his personality. But here the question arises, whether this unity, which as the unity of finite and infinite is purely abstract, is such that it can be figured to the mind, and corresponds to concrete reality. Though the relation of the Father and Son, as determined by the conception of eternal generation, was so peculiar that the ordinary categories of human thought were inapplicable to it, still, it was urged, it ought to be capable of being placed before the imagination in some comprehensible and tangible form. But here was the weak point of the theory. All that the anti-Arian doctors could bring forward to justify themselves was the well-known analogy, already often used, of the natural relation between the light and the ray. The Father cannot be conceived apart from the Son whom he has begotten, any more than the ray can be separated from the light. But if the relation of the Son to the Father is that of a ray proceeding from light, what becomes of the personal subsistence of the Son, an idea no less essential to the true conception of him? Is the Son a mere accident of the substance of the Father, a mere unessential reflection? If it was replied that the distinction

between the natural phenomena and the analogous relation of the Father and the Son lay in this very point, that the Son in his unity with the Father possessed also his own personal existence, then the basis of the reasoning, the observation of a natural process, was abandoned, and the whole idea was made to rest on nothing. Thus the dilemma remained,—either the divine eternal generation must be conceived according to the analogy of a natural process, and the supramaterial substance of God be thereby apparently degraded to the material, so that the notion in question still remained open to the same objections as before, or all must be resigned, save a mere transcendental conception, devoid of all concrete significance.

A general view of the two opposite systems, as contrasted according to their respective governing principles, shows us plainly the same modes of view whose antagonism has appeared in its various phases in the whole previous history of dogma. We have now merely a new and more sharply-defined form of antithesis. But the fact that the antithesis was now so sharply marked gave promise of a final decision of the struggle. During the whole previous course of development, the prominent tendency of the Christian mind had been to hold fast equally to the two equally essential principles of the Son's unity with the Father and his personal distinction from him, difficult as it was to combine the two in a real and not merely apparent consistency. So much had anti-Arianism in its favour. But when Arianism put forth such energy, and applied its analysing dialectic to such unsparing rejection of all but clear and definite conceptions, whatever difficulty the anti-Arians already felt in maintaining their own doctrine, so deficient in precision and intrinsic vigour, was inevitably increased. The circumstances, however, which had lately procured for Christianity quite a new position in the world, interfered to exert a powerful influence on the decision of the controversy. Already the political situation of the Christians, now that the persecutions had ceased, and Christianity was on the point of becoming the Roman state-religion, had essentially

contributed to give the Arian controversy a far greater extent and importance than that of any previous dispute. And now, under an emperor who united in himself the Christian and the Roman powers, the decision was closely bound up with Roman state interests. In the Empire generally, Constantine, as sole ruler, made it his systematic policy to bring harmony out of discordance, to reconcile conflicting and to adjust incongruous elements, and to found a new order of things, in which Christianity was to take the position that rightly belonged to it. In the same spirit he applied himself to the Arian question, in order, with regard to this also, to establish over the whole world rest, order, and peace. He summoned the Council of Nice, the first œcumenical council, representing the whole Christian part of the Roman world, a meeting which marks an epoch chiefly because it was an imposing manifestation of the unity of Christianity with the Roman state, and of the attachment both of the state and the Christian Church to this unity. The resolutions adopted at such a council must necessarily be of the highest importance. The result of the Council of Nice was that Arianism was rejected, and that the belief in the Son was enunciated in the formula: He is begotten from the substance of God, God begotten from God, light from light, very God from very God, begotten, not made, of the same substance (ὁμοούσιος) with the Father.

The Homoousia was ever afterwards the standing characteristic expression for the relation of the Son to the Father, as finally determined and settled by the Church. One side of the doctrine of Christ's Godhead, namely, that side which had always tended to the closest identification of the Son and the Father, reached its furthest point of development in the Nicene conception. No further advance in this direction was possible, if there was to be any distinction at all between the Father and the Son. The Homoousia was intended to express the most decided antithesis to the Arian separation of the Father from the Son. If we seek for a more particular elucidation of the term, we may refer to such an authentic interpreter of the Council's meaning as Athanasius—

himself one of the chief spokesmen of the anti-Arian party. His elucidation, however, only serves to show that the conceptions of the orthodox disputants were far from having grasped any clear and determinate notion. We must by no means, says Athanasius, think of anything corporeal; abstracting from all materiality, we must view in pure thought the proper relation of the Son to the Father, of the Logos to God, and the perfect likeness of the ray to the light. Since the substance in question here is strictly incorporeal, the oneness of nature and of the identity of the light must be kept undivided. It is absolutely necessary to adhere to the metaphor of the light and the ray. The ray of the sun is nothing alien from him, nothing unlike him; light and ray are one and the same: the one is ever beheld in the other. In the same way, in the relation of the Father and the Son, the like oneness and natural property can be properly denoted by no other term than ὁμοούσιος. Such, accordingly, was the idea which the fathers of the Nicene Council designed to express by their formula.[1] The formula was therefore not intended to convey its apparently obvious meaning, the natural relation of two substances connected by derivation or emanation. And yet, on the other hand, this very physical analogy was to be the necessary figure by means of which alone this peculiar relation could be represented. The emphatic protest of Arius and his adherents against any joining of emanation with the idea of God, had at any rate had so much effect, that it was thought more necessary to be guarded on this side than on any other. For this reason the proposed formula, which gave rise to a lively dispute at the Council, could only be carried under the express proviso that it was not designed to enunciate concerning the Son any bodily affection, any separation, any division from the Father, since the immaterial, spiritual, incorporeal nature of God excluded all bodily affections. It was only to be taken as expressing this—that the Son bore no likeness to the creatures, but was in every way like the Father who had begotten him, and like him alone. But how was it to be

[1] Athanas. de Decr. Syn. Nic. c. 20-25.

said that he was begotten from the Father, if nothing could be said concerning the manner of his generation? Although, therefore, the formula seemed to be perfectly positive, nothing was really established but an indeterminate, negative conception, devoid of concrete meaning; and all the efforts exerted to secure the adoption of the formula would have been in vain, had not the authority of the Emperor interposed. It is true that the doctors (*e.g.* Athanasius) attempt to ignore the operation of this cause. But the narrative of Eusebius removes all doubt that the personal influence of the Emperor decided the final result of the Council. The fact that the Emperor had at first declared a different opinion[1] confirms the supposition that it was Alexandrian influence which induced him to favour the term ὁμοούσιος. For such was the power which the hierarchy had now attained, that the ultimate guiding force in this matter, as in others, can be looked for nowhere else. Now, if we recall the first commencement of this struggle, we shall observe that, in Alexandria, where the presbyters longest maintained their free position against the bishops, a presbyter stood at variance with his bishop upon the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ; and that hence the controversy arose. It was inevitable that the final decision should be such as to give the bishop the victory over the presbyter who opposed him. The further history of dogma shows plainly enough how close was the connection between the dogma now established as Catholic and the hierarchical aims and requirements of the bishops.

We have thus seen that the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ is nothing else than the cardinal point of the whole theological movement of the pre-Nicene period. This doctrine may therefore be justly called the characteristic expression of the mind of the age, in so far as it was concerned with dogma. The overwhelming importance attributed to it, and its ultimate elaboration in the form of the Homoousia, would have been impossible, had not the universal tendency of men's minds been towards the supramaterial,

[1] Cf. the letter of Constantine to Alexander and Arius (Eusebius, Vita Const. ii. 69).

the metaphysical, the transcendental. Even in the case of the person of Christ, humanity was so overshadowed by divinity, that all ideas relating to the human element were really absent from dogmatic thought. But though all thought was thus absorbed in the idea of God, and turned upon pure theology, it did but dissipate itself in abstract definitions devoid of concrete meaning. Notwithstanding all endeavours to fix the relations of the Trinity, and thus to bring the idea of God to a precise dogmatic conception, the doctrine of God was not felt and appreciated as a truth that exerted a decisive influence upon the remaining articles of the faith. In fact, this first period generally is characterised by the peculiar relative position of the several elements which together form the furniture of the Christian religious mind. They stand apart and unconnected. Thus, when Origen in his work *Περὶ ἀρχῶν*, made the first attempt at a systematic statement of the Christian faith, he brought its essential principles under the three chief categories of God, the world, and freedom, and gave each of these three principles such an independent position by the side of the others, that each of the three parts was merely the whole under a different aspect.

Nor must this be thought a feature peculiar to Origen. Rather, it is thoroughly consistent with the standpoint then occupied by dogma in general. God—the world, as finite—man, as reasonable,—still confront one another in such complete independence, that (as we saw in Origen's system) the whole relation of man to God, or of God and the world, conceived by means of the idea of God on the one side and that of freedom on the other, is really viewed under a purely dualistic aspect. All that according to the later Church system composes specific Christian doctrine—the theory of the God-man, and of the means necessary for the salvation of man—is as yet virtually without a place in dogma. On the one hand, the true conception of grace and its effects in the later Church sense is foreign to the doctors of this period: they speak only of God's love and benignity, and his goodwill to man, or of his providence and government generally. With respect to man,

on the other hand, the greatest importance is attributed to the freedom of his will. Every eminent doctor expressly recognises the truth that unless man is free and, as free and self-determining, is the true accountable author of all his actions, the distinction disappears between good and evil, between virtue and vice, and there is no ground for ascribing to Christianity the character of a moral religion as distinguished from heathenism. Whatever gives man any moral and religious worth in the sight of God arises therefore out of freedom: and thus, from the nature of the case, the faith which is the condition of the attainment of Christian salvation can only be a practical behaviour, an active compliance with God's commands. This conception of freedom of itself repudiates that limitation of man's activity on the one side or the other which follows from the antithesis of sin and grace: and it especially refuses to suppose that the nature of man justifies the identification of sin and nature,—though no doubt Tertullian tended to this latter view. In order to maintain this idea of freedom in its fullest sense, not only was it firmly maintained in contrast and opposition to the rival heathen notion of blind fate and chance, and the Gnostic theory of astrological destiny, but endeavours were made to remove all the difficulties which it seemed to encounter in the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, or the belief in the prophecies, or texts apparently leaning to determinism. Nay, so unable were Christians now to conceive that the relation of man to God could rest on any other basis than human freedom, that Origen, the first doctor who put forth a theory of his own upon the relation of the divine and human elements in Christ's person, believed that freedom alone could here be the bond of the two natures in the God-man. According to the well-known Platonic tripartition, followed by Origen, the soul, as holding a middle position between the spirit and the body, is the principle of the will. The will decides itself with equal freedom in the direction of the spirit or of the body. Now all other souls being created by God as reasonable substances, have come down by apostasy from God from the upper world, and have thus, as cooled

spirits, become souls. That which is found in them now in a higher, now in a lower degree, and can only be affirmed of them relatively, may be affirmed of the soul of Jesus absolutely. His soul alone, through the undivided tendency of its will and the never-dying glow of its love, has been from the beginning so inseparably joined to the Divine Logos, that it has passed into its being. The two are no more two, but essentially one: and what was at first merely free determination of the will has become nature. Following this train of thought, Origen employed the image (afterwards so much used) of iron pervaded by the glow of fire, as a means of vividly presenting the penetration of the human by the divine in Christ's person. The same principle of moral freedom, as necessarily belonging to reasonable beings, which is thus so important for the doctrine of man and Christ, is extended also to the doctrine of angels and demons. From the freedom of the will and the possibility of using it both for good and bad—from this and this alone comes the existence of demons as well as angels in the upper region between God and man. And when these two antagonistic realms had been presupposed, the field of Christian revelation was regarded from a dualistic point of view; the death of Christ being viewed as a struggle against the devil, and the struggles of the Christian martyrs being imagined as ever-victorious repulses of the attacks of the demons after Christ's example.

The doctrine of angels and demons on the one side, and the doctrine of the last things on the other, enabled fancy to range freely over the domain of the supra-material, and gave a wide scope to the influence of heathen and Jewish ideas: and thus Christianity could never afterwards cease to be conscious of that element, belonging also to heathenism and Judaism, from which it had sprung. But on the other hand, a doctrine was at that time being formed, which not only, like the doctrine of the Trinity, expressed what was peculiar to Christian dogma, but also afforded a very specific expression of the character of Christianity, as it now began to assume the shape of the Church. This was the doctrine concerning

the Church itself. The basis of the dogma of the one saving Church was already laid; it was uttered by Cyprian when he laid down that he who had not the Church for his mother, could not have God for his father.[1] This tenet was in fact only the consequence of premises already given. It could not but necessarily follow, when the idea of the Catholic Church had gained such realisation that none could belong to its community who did not confess its tradition; and when still further, Catholic dogma acquired its proper and determinate substance in the doctrine of the divinity of Christ.

But even in the controversy against the Montanists and Novatians—the first occasion on which the doctrine of the Church was brought into discussion—it was inevitably seen that if the one Apostolic Church was to be not only Catholic, but also holy, the predicates thus attributed to it would become conflicting antinomies. According to the Montanist and Novatianist view of the essence of the Church, the predicate of holiness was so highly exalted, that the Church, as the Church of the Spirit, was only to consist of the spiritales in contra-distinction to the psychici. They therefore wished to exclude from the Church all whose transgressions were so notorious, that if they were included within it, it could not maintain this predicate of holiness.[2]

As therefore the Catholic Christians, the psychici, were obliged, in order not to compromise the catholicity of the Church, to curtail the notion of the Church's holiness and to make the criterion of

[1] Cyprian de Unitate Ecclesiae, c. 5: Habere jam non potest Deum patrem, qui ecclesiam non habet matrem. Si potuit evadere quisquam, qui extra arcam Noe fuit, et qui extra ecclesiam foris fuerit, evadet. The same doctrine appears in the Shepherd, where the Church is represented under the image of a tower in process of building, for which only the stones described by the Shepherd can be used.—Vis. 3. The writer entertains the exalted idea of the Church, that it omnium prima creata est, et propter illam mundus factus est.—Vis. 2. 4.

[2] In this sense the Novatians called themselves "the pure," *καθαροὺς*. It is in connection with them that the term "Catholic" first appears in its special significance. Eusebius says of the Roman presbyter Novatus (E. H. vi. 43), the same whose Roman name is generally Novatian, that he as the founder of the Novatians, *ἰδίας αἱρεσέως τῶν κατὰ λογισμοῦ φυσίωσιν Καθαροὺς ἑαυτοὺς ἀποφηνάντων ἀρχηγὸς καθίσταται.*

communion with her consist in mere assent to her doctrine and tradition, so the Montanists and Novatians were obliged to subordinate the notion of catholicity to that of holiness. What makes a man unworthy of the communion of the Church was, according to them, the committing of any of those particular sins which they regarded as mortal. But what is lost through sin can be recovered by the forgiveness of sins. Thus the question of the Church is bound up with the question of the possibility of forgiveness and the right to forgive sins. The Montanists allowed the possibility of forgiveness, nor did they positively deny the right of the Church to receive again into her communion, with a declaration of forgiveness, those who had fallen into mortal sin. They asserted however,[1] that absolution could in no case be given by the clergy, the bishops of the Catholic Church, but could only be given by the prophets, as the organs of the Spirit who stood upon the same level as the Apostles. Thus they regarded the forgiveness of sins not as the act of the Church, but as the immediate act of God. They therefore denied to the penitent sinner the absolution of the Church, but left open to him the hope of the mercy of God, exhorted him to penitence and repentance, and made him the object of their intercessions, while they left the result to the compassion of God. Thus, as has justly been observed,[2] a distinction was drawn between the relation of the individual to the Church and his relation to God, and the presumption was thus admitted that salvation could be obtained without the pale of the Church; and not only the exclusive character of the Church, but the very idea of the visible Church, was surrendered. It might not be perceived that this was the logical result of the position, but the principle of the Church was virtually given up. What was said was, in effect, that God alone can forgive sins; the prophets have indeed authority to do so, but they make no use of this authority, lest after the sins which are forgiven, other sins should be committed.[3] They had thus before their eyes the

[1] See *supra*, p. 46. [2] Schwegler, Mont. p. 232.

[3] Potest ecclesia donare delictum, sed non faciam, ne et alia delinquant, says a Montanist prophet, quoted by Tertullian, De Pud. cap. 21.

apprehension, which the practice of the Catholic Church in subsequent times proved to be by no means unfounded, that the forgiveness of sins might itself prove a means of promoting sin. In order to guard against this danger, they desired that no forgiveness of sins should be granted at all; since what had happened once might equally well happen again at any future time. As penitence and repentance must always be conditions of the forgiveness of sins, the subject of repentance also opened up the same question. Indeed the question concerned the whole doctrine of the Church. Repentance being a necessary condition of the forgiveness of sins in baptism, the possibility of a second repentance after the first was a further and most important point in the conflict between the Catholic Church on the one side and the Montanists and Novatians on the other. One repentance after the first in baptism, as the limit of the divine indulgence, is conceded, not only by the Shepherd of Hermas,[1] but even by Tertullian[2] in his earlier period. After he became a Montanist, however, he declared repentance after baptism to be entirely vain and fruitless. Here we touch the turning-point of the strife between the Catholic Church and the Montanists, which we have already discussed. Cyprian taunted such opponents with the inconsistency of exhorting to repentance and yet refusing penance as a means of grace.[3] On this point the Novatians agreed entirely with the Montanists, and even at the Synod of Nicaea the Novatian bishop Acesius appeared as a champion of Montanist principles regarding repentance and absolution.[4]

[1] Mand. iv. i. Cp. however, *supra*, p. 50 *sqq.*
[2] De Poenit. c. 7.
[3] Ep. lv.
[4] Socrates, E. H. i. 10.

PART FIFTH.

CHRISTIANITY AS A POWER RULING THE WORLD, IN ITS RELATION TO THE HEATHEN WORLD AND TO THE ROMAN STATE.

LOOKING at the various sides of the historical appearance of Christianity we see that it develops and realises on a constantly increasing scale the absolute idea which is its essential contents. It could not assert itself as a principle of salvation without doing away with the barrier of particularism which Judaism sought to place in its way: again, it could not take up its position in the world as a real historical phenomenon, without framing the idea of the Catholic Church which enabled it to throw off those tendencies which threatened it on two sides, and the prevalence of either of which would alike have made its historical development impossible. On the one side there was the danger of accepting the Christ of Gnosticism, in which case the specific faith of Christianity would have evaporated into the idea of a universal world-process, and Christianity itself would have melted into a general speculative view of the world. On the other side there was the danger of accepting a Montanist Christ, and of finding that Christianity had come into the world for no end but to lose in a short time, in that final catastrophe which put an end to all history, the basis of its own historical existence. Further, when Christianity proceeded to realise the contents of its own dogma, as the absolute truth immanent in the Catholic Church, it could not do so without advancing to the notion of the Homoousia, and thus, in the idea of a Christ who was essentially one with God, claiming

to be itself the highest absolute revelation of God. But even in all these advances Christianity had not yet exhausted the sphere in which it was to realise the absolute idea of its own nature. In all those relations which we have mentioned, the opposition which had to be surmounted was an inner one, and presented itself within the Christian circle. We have now to place before us the outer side of Christianity, that side which it turned to the non-Christian world. The very idea of the Catholic Church, being an idea which has to realise itself in order to reach its historical existence in the world, involves the notion of a power which outwardly as well as inwardly knows itself supreme and is able to overcome all opposition and hostility. If Christianity be the universal, the absolute religion, then it must attain to universal dominion and become the religion of the world. Christianity and the Roman Empire could not co-exist in the world without sooner or later coalescing in a unity. It is regarded as the most obvious proof of the divinity of Christianity that this goal was reached in so short a time and by so brilliant a victory. But what is much more important is to trace the path which led to this goal, considering what was its beginning at first, and following all its windings in such a way as to become aware not only of the change which appears so great in the history of the world, but also of the inner process by which it was brought about. If Christianity became the ruling religion of the Roman Empire, that must of necessity have been because its world-wide dominion was but the outward manifestation of the power which it had gained inwardly in the consciousness of the age. Thus in the historical subject with which we are now to deal, two distinct sides have to be considered. First of all the question presents itself in what way the change of the whole consciousness of the age came about in that heathen world which stood over against Christianity; and then we have to inquire how the outward position of Christianity relatively to the Roman Empire came more and more to correspond to that change which was going on inwardly in men's minds.

1. THE RELATION OF CHRISTIANITY TO THE HEATHEN WORLD AND TO THE ROMAN STATE, ON ITS INNER SIDE.

GOING back to the first beginning of this process of development, so vital to the history of the world, we see the least and the greatest confronting each other, Christianity on the one side, and the Roman Empire on the other. But the least in this instance not only carries in itself the germ of world-wide dominion; it also gives utterance from the very beginning and at every point of its development to its consciousness of possessing a power which should overcome the world. The world-consciousness expressed at the outset in the words of Jesus, when he said to his disciples that they were "the salt of the earth," is characteristic of Christianity in general. This was the guiding thought by which the Christians were inspired from the beginning and at a time when their outward situation offered the strongest contrast to these world-wide views. Though in various forms, this feeling never ceased to find significant expression among them. They are always more or less clearly conscious that they are the soul of the world, the substantial centre holding everything together, the pivot on which the world's history revolves, and those who alone have a future to look forward to. In his Apology, which was written in the reign of Marcus Aurelius about the year 170, Melito, the bishop of Sardis, reminds the Emperor and the Romans, that the appearance of Christianity in the world was contemporary with the reign of the Emperor Augustus, which was such an epoch in history; at that time, he says, the Roman Empire reached the highest point of its prosperity, and since that time both have been together in the world to their mutual advantage.[1] From his point of view he

[1] Eusebius, E. H. iv. 26. In the most important passage of this fragment Melito says, Ἡ γὰρ καθ' ἡμᾶς φιλοσοφία (*i.e.* Christianity, which is spoken of in the same way in other passages of the writings of the Apologists; cp. Tatian, Or. c. Gr. 35) πρότερον μὲν ἐν βαρβάροις ἤκμασεν, ἐπανθήσασα δὲ τοῖς σοῖς ἔθνεσι κατὰ τὴν Αὐγούστου τοῦ σοῦ προγόνου μεγάλην ἀρχήν, ἐγενήθη μάλιστα τῇ σῇ

naturally attributed the good fortune which had attended the Roman State since Augustus, to Christianity, as a new source of welfare now opened to the world. Even at that time, then, the Christians considered that in all essential respects the welfare of the Roman Empire depended on Christianity, and thus it was a natural and necessary inference from the fact of their co-existence, that the welfare of the world was established on a firm basis just in proportion to the closeness of the tie by which the two powers were connected into a unity. The same world-consciousness by which the Christians were inspired, appeared in the view of the world to which Tertullian, not yet turned Montanist, gave utterance when he said that the Christians alone delayed by their prayers the destruction of the world, and so kept the Roman Empire standing: that it was for their sake alone that God deferred the general dissolution.[1] Among the earlier doctors of the Church there is no

βασιλείᾳ αἴσιον ἀγαθὸν, ἔκτοτε γὰρ εἰς μέγα καὶ λαμπρὸν τὸ Ῥωμαίων ηὐξήθη κράτος, οὗ σὺ διάδοχος εὐκταῖος γέγονάς τε καὶ ἔσῃ μετὰ τοῦ παιδὸς, φυλάσσων τῆς βασιλείας τὴν σύντροφον καὶ συναρξαμένην Αὐγούστῳ φιλοσοφίαν, ἣν καὶ οἱ πρόγονοί σου πρὸς ταῖς ἄλλαις θρησκείαις ἐτίμησαν. Καὶ τοῦτο μέγιστον τεκμήριον τοῦ πρὸς ἀγαθοῦ τὸν καθ' ἡμᾶς λόγον συνακμάσαι τῇ καλῶς ἀρξαμένῃ βασιλείᾳ ἐκ τοῦ μηδὲν φαῦλον ἀπὸ τῆς Αὐγούστου ἀρχῆς ἀπαντῆσαι, ἀλλὰ τοὐναντίον ἅπαντα λαμπρὰ καὶ ἔνδοξα κατὰ τὰς πάντων εὐχάς. How apt and suggestive is the description of Christianity in its relation to the Roman State since Augustus, as the *σύντροφος τῆς βασιλείας φιλοσοφία*! Christianity and the Empire are, as it were, two brothers, bound together by the tie of a common infancy.

[1] Apolog. c. 32. Est et alia major necessitas nobis orandi pro Imperatoribus, etiam pro omni statu imperii, rebusque Romanis, qui vim maximam universo orbi imminentem, ipsamque clausulam seculi, acerbitates horrendas comminantem, Romani imperii commeatu scimus retardari. Itaque nolumus experiri, et dum precamur differri, Romanae diuturnitati favemus. C. 39. Oramus,—pro statu seculi, pro rerum quiete, pro mora finis. For the Montanist counterpart to this petition, see *supra*, vol. i. p. 248. Compare Justin, Apol. 2. 7; *Ὅθεν καὶ ἐπιμένει ὁ Θεὸς τὴν σύγχυσιν καὶ κατάλυσιν τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου μὴ ποιῆσαι, ἵνα καὶ οἱ φαῦλοι ἄγγελοι καὶ δαίμονες καὶ ἄνθρωποι μηκέτι ὦσι, διὰ τὸ σπέρμα τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ὃ γινώσκει ἐν τῇ φύσει ὅτι αἰτιόν ἐστιν. Ἐπεὶ εἰ μὴ τοῦτο ἦν, οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ ὑμῖν ταῦτα ἔτι ποιεῖν καὶ ἐνεργεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν φαύλων δαιμόνων δυνατὸν ἦν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πῦρ τὸ τῆς κρίσεως κατελθὸν, ἀνέδην πάντα διέκρινεν.* The Christians are conscious of being the world-preserving principle. Everything in the world depends on them, and even what you heathens do against Christ is done under the condition, that for the sake of the Christians God will not yet let the world perish. Were it not for the Christians it would not be possible for you to do what you are doing, and to be incited thereto by the wicked demons.

one in whom this feeling was more alive, or by whom it was expressed with greater energy and beauty, than the unknown author of the *Epistola ad Diognetum*. After depicting in sharp antitheses the peculiar enigmatical life of the Christians, contrasting in so many points with the whole of their surroundings, he sums up his description of them in the proposition: "In a word, the Christians are in the world what the soul is in the body. The soul is diffused through all the members of the body: so are the Christians through the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, but is not of the body; so, the Christians dwell in the world, but are not of the world. The soul keeps watch invisible in the visible world: the Christians are seen living in the world, but their piety remains invisible. The flesh hates the soul and strives against it although uninjured by it, because it hinders the flesh from following its lusts: so does the world hate the Christians unjustly, because they oppose themselves to its lusts. The soul loves the flesh and the members which hate it, and the Christians love those who hate them. The soul is confined in the body, but holds the body together: and the Christians are held in the world as in a prison, but hold together even the world itself. The soul, immortal, dwells in the mortal body, and the Christians dwell in the corruptible, but look for incorruption in heaven. Such is the position which God has given the Christians in the world, and which no one can deny to them." Where there are men who feel themselves in this way to be the soul of the world, the time is indisputably approaching when the reins of the government of the world will fall unasked into their hands.

But before things had advanced so far, how much had to be surmounted, what repugnance, what detestation, what hatred and enmity against Christianity and its adherents had to be overcome in the minds of the heathen world! The view which the Christians held of heathenism was more than balanced by the view taken of Christianity by the heathens. To the Christians heathenism as a whole was the kingdom of demons who by falsehood and subtilty, and all the arts of deception, seduced men to worship them as gods. It was just because they had a special

hatred of whatever opens the eyes of men to the light of truth, and destroys the delusions with which they mock themselves, that they were the bitterest enemies of the Christians, and in spite of all the defeats they had to suffer, never paused in their hostile activity. The heathens, on the other hand, saw in the Christians a race hostile to mankind and hardly worthy of the human name,[1] and in Christianity itself, anything rather than an institution possessing the most distant claim to the name of a religion. Every sort of irreligion and immorality was laid at the door of Christianity. All the charges made against it, however, were included in the three accusations, which as we see from the writings of the apologists[2] were universally current, of *ἀθεότης*, of *θυέστεια δεῖπνα* and of *οἰδιπόδειοι μίξεις*. That the Christians appeared to the heathens as atheists (*ἄθεοι*, as they are so often called) is very natural, since they not only refused to acknowledge the heathen gods, but also gave so little indication of having a religious cultus of their own. But the fact that they were believed to commit at their meetings such revolting acts as were only to be heard of in ancient myths dating from a time far antecedent to all civilisation and humanity, is a proof of more than ordinary hatred. From whatever source such charges may have flowed,[3] as soon as they had

[1] Tert. Apol. cap. 37 ; hostes maluistis vocare generis humani (Christianos).

[2] Comp. Justin Apol. 1, 26; Dial. c. Tr. c. 10; Tatian Or. c. Gr. c. 25; Athenagoras Leg. c. 31; Tert. Apol. c. 7; Min. Felix Oct. c. 9; Origenes c. Cels. 6, 27, 40.

[3] The expressions are taken from old Greek myths, but this does not prevent us from assuming that the chief originators of the charges were Jews. Quod enim aliud genus seminarium est infamiae nostrae? says Tertullian, ad Nat. i. 14. The lies and calumnies of the Talmud are analogous. See *infra*, p. 143. The primary occasion of the charges is doubtless to be found in the custom of the primitive Christians to come together at night in memory of that night in which the Lord was betrayed, and before he was betrayed celebrated the Eucharist with his disciples (1 Cor. xi. 23), and in the terms flesh and blood, with which the principal act of their meeting was indicated. The chief accusation was thus that of *ἀνθρωποφαγία*, and Tatian, Or. cap. 25, does nothing more than simply protest against it. But even Justin, Apol. i. 26, was aware that the Christians were charged not only with *ἀνθρωπείων σάρκων βοραὶ*, but also with *λυχνίας ἀνατροπή*, and *ἀνέδην μίξεις*, the latter being believed to follow the former (Dial. cap. 10). In Tertullian we see this worked up to a scene which unites in itself, in a word, everything horrible that could serve to inflame the popular fancy against such a

obtained general circulation as popular rumours, they were not only spun out to greater length in fabulous narratives, but the universal prejudice caused them to be the more readily believed. Indeed they seemed to derive confirmation from many of those features in which the Christians were distinguished from the Jews and heathens, distinctions which, as Christianity spread, became more and more noticeable. Such were their habit of holding their meetings at night, the meals which were customary at those meetings, the intimate brotherhood which they cultivated with each other, awaking the suspicion of a secret connection, their timid manner of life, retiring from men, and withdrawing themselves from public life, and many other traits of this kind. This accordingly was that exitiabilis superstitio, notorious on account of the flagitia connected with it, as Tacitus calls Christianity: a judgment of great interest to us, since it must be allowed to count as the expression of the genuine Roman view of that age. To understand this expression aright, and to comprehend the fact that not only the great mass of the people, but even the men of highest cultivation could

sect. Dicimur sceleratissimi de sacramento infanticidii et pabulo inde, et post convivium incesto, quod eversores luminum canes, lenones scilicet tenebrarum, libidinum impiarum in verecundiam procurent. Apol. c. 7. Cp. ad Nat. 1. 7: Infans—qui immoletur et panis aliquantum, qui in sanguine infringatur: praeterea candelabra, quae canes annexi deturbent, et offulae, quae eosdem canes.

Minucius Felix, Oct. c. 9, makes his heathen Caecilius narrate in still greater detail the detestanda fabula, the action of which is specially intended for the initiandi tirunculi. The same story meets us afterwards in a changed form in connection with the Manichees of the Middle Ages. Here the child is the fruit of the concubitus, which is described in the same way as formerly, and the ashes of his body, burned after eight days, have the demonic power of retaining for ever in connection with the sect him who has eaten even a small portion of them. The devil now plays a part in the transaction along with the demons. The legend of the Euchites who came from Western Asia to Thrace had passed over to these Manichees. Of the Euchites Michael Psellus, writing about the middle of the eleventh century (De operatione demonum, ed. Boissonade, Norimb. 1838, p. 8), tells the same story of the nightly extinction of lights and incestuous sexual intercourse, of the murder and burning of the children who were born from these unions, and the magic influence of their ashes mixed with their blood. Between this form of the fable, where old oriental ideas of demons and their works of darkness have been at work upon it (cp. Das manichäische Religionssystem, p. 134 *sq.*), and that old simple form, Tertullian's sacramentum infanticidii is the middle link; but where did this notion itself come from?

pass such a judgment, it is necessary to bear in mind another fact which is unmistakably presented to us in Tacitus, that Christianity as it arose out of Judaea (the origo hujus mali), was considered to be merely an outcome of Judaism, and to contain, only in an intensified degree, all those elements which when they met them in Judaism excited in the Romans the most thorough-going national antipathy.[1] Of the character of the Jews, so opposed to the ideas, manners, and customs of all other people, and all those elements which made them in their own way so peculiar a nation, Tacitus could give no other explanation than to refer them to that hatred and enmity against all others with which they had from the beginning been filled, and which was the true principle of their nationality. Of the Christians he now has to say that their characteristic feature was odium generis humani; so that it seemed that they were necessarily excluded from the whole of the civilised and cultivated world. In fact, looking upon men of such cultivation and such views as those of Tacitus as the genuine representatives of the Romans of that time, we see that no two things could be more incompatible, or present a greater antithesis, than Christianity and the Roman Empire as it then was, and that the relation between them must have been one of simple repugnance and antagonism. We can scarcely conceive how the faith of a sect which had public opinion so much against it in all the strata of society, from the lowest to the highest, could ever overcome so great a chasm. And yet this by no means prevented Christianity from extending the limits of its power, originally so contracted, further and further. In the second half of the second century its opponents insisted on the fact which they deemed to be a reproach to Christianity,[2] that it found its supporters neither among the great mass of the people, nor among the cultivated

[1] The two descriptions given by Tacitus, first in his History, v. 2 *sq.*, of the Jews, and then in his Annals, xv. 44, of the Christians, mutually complement one another. In writing of the former the latter were always present to his mind. The whole impression which Judaism made upon him is expressed with great emphasis in the words, Judaeorum mos absurdus sordidusque.

[2] Comp. Celsus, in Orig. c. Cels. iii. 55.

class, but only among those who belonged to the ordinary citizen-class, among artisans and those who preferred to keep by themselves and avoided publicity. We could have no better picture of the quiet power by which Christianity attracted men's minds to itself and gradually and persistently extended the circle of its influence. Its converts were those who, in the barren void left in their religious consciousness by the disappearance of faith in the old gods, felt the need of some new spiritual matter to fill up that void, and who were attracted by the quiet, meditative religiousness of the Christians, by their self-denying taste for poverty in the midst of a luxury-loving world, and by their firm and hearty attachment to each other, at a time when the most important social ties were suffering almost universal dissolution. These things attracted them not less than that consolation which the Gospel promised to the conscience, and the expectation, aroused so powerfully by the belief in the parousia, of the great catastrophe, for which men were exhorted to hold themselves prepared. Christianity had thus, by the secret power which it exercised over men's spirits, won over to itself a much larger proportion of the heathen population than could be outwardly discerned; and when its advances became more evident, and violent measures were resorted to in order to check them, the consequence was only what Tertullian urges upon the heathen at the close of his Apology: Nec quicquam proficit exquisitior quaeque crudelitas vestra, illecebra est magis sectae, plures efficimur, quoties metimur a vobis, semen est sanguis Christianorum. It was just when such persecutions were being carried on, that men of philosophic culture began to go over to Christianity in greater numbers. The admiration which was forced from them by the steadfastness of the Christian martyrs compelled them to acknowledge that a doctrine which could inspire its confessors with such contempt of death must rest on a more than superficial truth, and must be as far as possible removed from being a promoter of sensual enjoyment.[1] As philosophers they were accustomed to consider that the chief task of philosophy was the carrying out of

[1] Justin, Apol. ii. 12.

its principles in the practice of its followers: and so Christianity with the strictly moral tendency which it exhibited in practice, appeared to them in the light of a philosophy, and after they became Christians they continued, only under another name, the same kind of life, a life devoted to philosophy, which they had formerly followed as philosophers.[1] What Justin, the philosopher and martyr, tells us of the motives which led him to go over to Christianity,[2] may doubtless be regarded as the history of the conversion of many a man of the same bent of mind besides. To us Justin is the chief representative of those men who may be classed together under the name of apologists of Christianity. By the mere fact that men such as they were, men familiar with Greek culture and philosophy, had gone over to Christianity out of the hostile camp, they initiated a new epoch of the relations of Christianity to the heathen world.

The task of the apologists was, generally speaking, to justify Christianity in the eyes of the world which stood over against it, and especially in the eyes of those who wielded the greatest influence over the relations subsisting between Christianity and the Roman State, and over the public life of the Christians and their position generally. The way in which they sought to gain this end was that they took up the coarse charges which were circulated against the Christians, and showed how absurd and frivolous they were, that they considered and tried to remove the prejudices which opposed Christianity in popular opinion, and that they entered upon detailed explanations with regard to the doctrines and principles of the Christians, their manners and usages, and their whole social and moral conduct, and so sought to prepare the way for a more accurate idea of the nature of Christianity, and to create a conviction that no danger to the state was to be feared from the Christians. The main point of all was that Christianity should be known to

[1] Even after becoming Christians they wore the philosopher's pallium. Cf. Justin, Dial. c. Jud. Tryph. c. 1; Tertullian, de Pallio, c. 6. Gaude, pallium et exulta, melior jam te philosophia dignata est, ex quo Christianum vestire coepisti. Neander, Antignosticus, p. 307 (Bohn's translation, ii. 423).

[2] Dial. cap. 8.

be what according to its true nature it was. If once it were known as being what it was, it seemed that it would not be possible to refuse it toleration in civil society. But the apologists went further than this. If the charges which the heathens made against Christianity were such that the relation of Christianity to the whole heathen world appeared to be one of the utmost repugnance and antagonism, the idea which the apologists entertained of that relation was not less exaggerated, only on the other side. Far from its being the fact that Christianity was a thing new and unheard of, which had all at once come into the world merely to oppose all that had passed till then for manners, humanity, and culture, and to the universal detestation of mankind; if men would but open their eyes, the apologists considered, they would behold the plainest proofs of its presence everywhere, in the midst of the heathen world, and even before the appearance of Christianity. As the Jews, when the Christians sought to convince them of the truth and divinity of Christianity, were directed to the Old Testament, and told that in that volume, if only its deeper spiritual meaning were rightly understood, everything was contained that belonged to the peculiar nature of Christianity, that all the facts of the Gospel history, to the smallest particulars, were to be found there in type and prophecy; so it was held that the strongest point of the apologies directed to the heathens lay in demonstrating to them, that even in the midst of the heathen world they were Christians without knowing it, that Christianity was present with them as the immanent truth of their own consciousness. There could certainly be nothing stronger than Justin's apostrophe to the heathen,[1] where, seeking to bring the truth of Christianity as clearly as possible before their eyes,

[1] Apol. i. 55. Compare Tertullian Apol. c. 16: Qui crucis nos religiosos putat, consecraneus noster erit.—Pars crucis est omne robur, quod erecta statione defigitur; nos si forte, integrum et totum Deum colimus. Diximus (c. 12) originem deorum vestrorum a plastis de cruce induci. Sed et victorias adoratis, cum in tropaeis cruces intestina sint tropaeorum. Religio Romana tota castrensis signa veneratur, signa jurat, signa omnibus diis praeponit. Omnes illi imaginum suggestus insignes monilia crucum sunt.

he points them to the figure of the cross which was everywhere present to them, and puts the question before them how they can continue in their unbelief, when in all the instruments they use in their handicrafts, their navigation and their agriculture, in the upright figure by which man is distinguished from the brutes, even in the banners and signs of victory which they use on public occasions as the symbols of their power and rule, and in the images of their departed emperors, the universal significance of the cross confronts them. And yet what a light does this argument shed upon the peculiar ways of looking upon things which those men must have had when Christianity, far from presenting a contrast to the world around them, had for the first time brought them to a clear consciousness with regard to what they had been and what they had had before them before they became Christians. And even though a view like this was, in the first instance, a mere vague play of the fancy, yet these men knew where to find deeper and more real foundation for their Christian universalism. It is not to be considered fortuitous that at the very time when it was so earnestly desired to bring Christianity nearer to the consciousness of the heathen world, and to minimize the difference which separated it from heathenism, the idea of the Logos became a ruling idea of the age. In the form which it has notably with Justin, it was quite peculiarly fitted to form a link between the Christian and the non-Christian elements of the time. The Logos who became man not only foretold the future in the Jewish prophets, but in the heathen world also brought about all that is to be found there of true and reasonable. Accordingly, Justin goes so far as to assert quite broadly that the reasonable is, as such, also Christian. All who have lived reasonably (μετὰ λόγου) are Christians, even though they were accounted as godless. All the excellent works of philosophers and legislators were accomplished by them not without a certain participation in the Logos; only they did not know the whole Logos, and hence they have frequently contradicted one another.[1] In defining this relation

[1] Apol. i. 46; ii. 10, 13.

Justin makes use of the Stoic doctrine of the λόγος σπερματικὸς; what the Logos is as the general reason in his unity and totality is thus distinguished from that which he is in a particular manner in individuals. The difference between the Christian and the non-Christian according to this view (which is also that which underlies the view of the world of Clement of Alexandria), is, that what Christianity is absolutely, since the whole Logos appeared in it, is also to be found outside Christianity, but only in a relative and particular manner, only imperfectly and fragmentarily; and this is the reason why what the Logos has operated spermatically has never penetrated into the general consciousness of mankind in such a way that it could have become the faith of the uneducated, and that it never called forth such enthusiasm, and such a capacity of self-sacrifice for the cause of truth, as the Christians showed by their contempt of death. This is what makes the difference between Socrates and Christ, great as the analogy is in many respects; and yet, inasmuch as in the notion of the Logos the Christian is essentially the rational, there is a very close inner relation between the Christian and the non-Christian, and Christianity everywhere encounters, even in the heathen world, elements of affinity and points of connection, of which it can lay hold. As Justin declares that the rational is also Christian, so Tertullian perceived in those simplest expressions of the religious consciousness, in which the heathen turned away without being aware of it from the polytheistic element of his idea of God, a testimonium animae naturaliter christianae.[1] This being so, it was not only legitimate, but necessary to do, what indeed a dialectical view of the facts commanded, viz. go back to the original and immediate, which was the necessary presupposition of polytheistic belief; and thus Christians and heathens stand on the same basis of universal reason and natural consciousness of God, and what is found in Christianity is the clear and picture-like expression for the popular consciousness, through the Logos-made man, of that which every one must recognise as the essentially true and reasonable.

[1] De Testimonio Animae, c. 1 *sq.* Apolog. c. 17.

What immediate impression these apologies produced, or if they even reached the hands of those for whom they were primarily intended, we do not know. There can be no doubt, however, as to the broad general fact that they contributed essentially to the result that the attention of an ever widening public was directed to Christianity, and that Christianity came to be seen in a quite different aspect from formerly. In place of the obscure popular rumours which had till now been so frequently the source of the information people had about Christianity, there were now literary works which it was impossible to disregard, and which afforded to every one who took an interest in the subject an opportunity of forming his own independent opinion upon it. Indeed these works challenged their readers to form such an opinion, and incited them to do so by the tone in which they were written. The more a man's acquaintance with Christianity extended, the less possible was it for him to close his eyes to the importance it had acquired as a new phenomenon of the age. Men could not but feel the necessity for going seriously and thoroughly into the question what was the state of the case with regard to Christianity, what there was in it, what claim it had to be considered true. It was impossible now to ignore it, or merely to put it aside with scorn and contempt. If a man could place no belief in Christianity, it was necessary to go a step further and make an attempt to refute it; and as such investigations brought into ever clearer light the whole wide difference between the Christian and the heathen views of the world, men were forced to go back to the ultimate principles on which the one and the other were based.

That among the enemies of Christianity in the second half of the second century there were not wanting men who were impressed to the utmost with the importance of this question, is proved by the remarkable work written against Christianity by the Greek philosopher Celsus. Of Celsus himself we have no further knowledge.[1] The title of his work was ἀληθὴς λόγος, and

[1] Who this Celsus was, against whom Origen wrote his famous apologetical work, it is not now possible to make out; even Origen knew no further details about

by it he doubtless meant to indicate the love of truth which had induced him to enter upon this refutation of Christianity. The work itself has been lost, but the abundant extracts from it preserved by Origen in the eight books of his reply, sufficiently attest the earnestness with which he pursued his aim, and the pains and care which he expended on the work. Not only was he acquainted with the original documents of the religion of the Christians—and it can be clearly proved that he knew several of the writings which stand to this day in the canon of the New Testament—he was also familiar with the principles, usages, and institutions of the Christians, the parties into which they were divided, and in fact with everything that characterised the Christians of the time, and appeared strange to a heathen antagonist. He is second to none of the assailants of Christianity in acuteness of mind, in dialectical skill, and in varied culture, both philosophical and general, and not seldom it creates a feeling of surprise

him. The different facts to be considered in connection with the question are the following:—According to the statement of Origen, i. 8, there were two men of the name of Celsus, who were both Epicureans; one of whom lived under Nero, the other under Hadrian and later. We can only have to do with the latter one here. That this Celsus (whom Origen is inclined to consider to be the Celsus against whom he wrote) was an Epicurean, Origen thought (loc. cit.) quite clearly proved by his other writings. He also mentions, iv. 36, other writings composed by one named Celsus an Epicurean, and speaks of two books written against the Christians. Further, Origen was acquainted with several books written by a Celsus against magic (i. 68), but though he generally holds his Celsus to be a disguised Epicurean, or the well-known Epicurean Celsus, yet in i. 68 he is uncertain if he is the author of the works against magic. In Lucian's Pseudomantis we find an Epicurean Celsus, who also wrote against the magicians. It was at the suggestion of his friend Celsus that Lucian wrote the history of Alexander of Abonoteichos, a notorious sorcerer, about the middle of the second century, who gave himself out for a prophet; this work was dedicated to Celsus, and in it Lucian speaks very highly in praise of Epicurus. There can be no doubt that the Celsus of Lucian is the Epicurean Celsus whom Origen knew from his other writings; but whether this Celsus is also the adversary of Christianity whom Origen refutes, is very doubtful; and in fact it is scarcely possible to suppose that he is, since the latter is a pronounced Platonist in his philosophical views and principles, and it is scarcely conceivable that he was really an Epicurean or even an eclectic. It is scarcely possible to arrive at a distinct result as to the person of Celsus, although the question has been so often discussed. (Compare especially Bindemann, über Celsus und seine Schrift gegen die Christen,

when we find him insisting very aptly and pertinently on those same general and far-reaching considerations to which all the subsequent assailants of Christianity have returned, although raising them in other forms, and from very different standpoints. It is thus of the greatest interest not only to make ourselves acquainted with the chief points of his contention against Christianity, but also, and this perhaps most of all, to find an answer to the question what judgment yielded itself to him at last out of all the studies and discussions he had taken in hand in various directions, as to the general nature and character of Christianity, and what was that general view formed by the age as to the relation of Christianity to the world confronting it, which his judgment reflects to us.

The work of Celsus seems to have been arranged very methodically, and even to some extent artistically; but on this point the materials for a distinct judgment are wanting, as Origen while regularly following the work of his opponent in its connection,

in Illgen's Zeitschr. für histor. Theol. 1842, p. 58 *sq.*). Yet a more correct interpretation of the passage iv. 36, than that usually given, would probably show that the two Celsus whose identity or distinctness from each other is in question,—the Celsus refuted by Origen and the Celsus generally known as the Epicurean—may be clearly distinguished from each other. In this passage Origen calls his Celsus an Epicurean, but adds, εἴγε οὗτός ἐστι καὶ ὁ κατὰ Χριστιανῶν ἄλλα δύο βιβλία συντάξας. Neander, K.-G. i. 274 (Bohn i. 222), has justly remarked that the books here spoken of can be no others than that one work which Origen wrote to refute; that Origen's doubt was simply whether the Epicurean could be the writer of that work. Whether or not he wrote two other books against the Christians was a point with which Origen had no concern here. The only point which Neander has failed to explain is how, if Origen had in his eye here that one work of Celsus, he could yet speak of δύο βιβλία. This, however, is fully explained by a remark made by Origen to Ambrosius at the end of his work, viii. 76. He tells Ambrosius that Celsus had announced his intention to write another work after this one, in which he would show how those are to live who wish to follow him and are able to do so. If he left this promised work unwritten, then the eight books written in refutation of his work might suffice; but if he had begun and finished it, Origen asks Ambrosius to inquire for the work and send it to him, that he might reply to it also. Without doubt, when Origen speaks of δύο βιβλία, he means the book against which he was writing and the other which he refers to in viii. 76. In iv. 36 he takes it for granted that Celsus had actually carried out that intention. Thus in any case there was only one Celsus who wrote against the Christians, not two.

yet passed over a great deal of it, thus leaving it uncertain how far the frequent repetitions and digressions which are found in Celsus according to Origen, are to be put down to the account of the original author. We are able, however, to infer something more as to the arrangement of the work from observing how the materials are apportioned to the various personages. Before Celsus appears in his own person a Jew comes forward to take the part of Judaism, and the author's objections are placed in his mouth. The object of this was not only to give dramatic life to the scene of the controversy, but also, and chiefly, to eliminate those parts of the dispute which the Jew could bring forward from his own point of view, and so to give more sharpness and weight to those principal objections which formed the loftier contention of the heathen opponent, and the ultimate decision regarding which was only to be found in philosophy. In this distribution of the parts the Jew had to take up all the points affecting the credibility and inner probability of the evangelical history. He attacks the narrative of the birth of Jesus of the Virgin, and maintains that his mother was a poor woman who supported herself by her own labour, and whom her husband had convicted of adultery. Cast off and wandering about, in her shameful retirement she gave birth to Jesus, who, being forced by poverty to take service in Egypt, learned secret arts there which he practised on his return, and by means of which he obtained such success that he called himself a god.[1] Celsus very correctly put this accusation in the mouth of his Jew; he appears to have taken it from a tradition which was doubtless current among the Jews of the time.[2] Most of his other objections are rather negative in their nature; he seeks to

[1] i. 28.

[2] i. 32. Origen quotes from Celsus, that the father of Jesus was a soldier of the name of Panthera. In the Talmud also Jesus is called יֵשׁוּ בֶן פַּנְדִּירָא. The name, as Nitzsch points out (Theol. stud. u. Krit., 1840, i. 115), is tantamount to son of the courtesan. The word passed into Chaldee from Greek, where πάνθηρ, panthera, like the Latin lupa, was a figure of greedy lust, avaricious wantonness, of a woman who hunts after all, ἀπὸ τοῦ πᾶν θηρᾶν. It is thus simply another expression for the notion of πορνεία.

demonstrate the unworthy and improbable elements to be found in the Gospel narrative. Thus he asks with respect to the birth of Jesus, whether his mother was beautiful, and God was enamoured of her on account of her beauty; and how it agrees with the kingdom of God, that he allowed her to be cast out?[1] Again, why the child Jesus was removed to Egypt: was God also afraid of death? True, an angel came from heaven with the command to flee; but could not the great God, who had already sent two angels on account of Jesus, have kept his own son safe at home? From his death one might see that he had not such blood as, according to Homer, flows in the veins of the blessed gods. The old myths of sons of God, of a Perseus, Amphion, Aeacus, Minos, deserve no credence, and yet the great and wonderful deeds of these personages add credit to the stories: but what great thing was accomplished by Jesus in word or deed? Although the Jews challenged him in the temple to show himself, by a miracle that they could see, to be the Son of God, yet he did nothing.[2] How could they hold one for a god who not only failed to do aught of what he promised, but also, when the Jews convicted and condemned him, and judged him worthy of death, hid himself, was seized in a disgraceful flight, and betrayed by those who were called his disciples? A god should not have fled, nor have been taken away bound; but least of all should he who was counted the Redeemer, the son of the great God, and an angel, have been forsaken and betrayed by those who were with him, who lived in his intimate intercourse and shared everything with him, and looked to him as their teacher.[3] The Jew laid special stress upon the fact that Jesus was betrayed by his own disciples. This, he said, was a thing which had never happened to any good general, even with many myriads of men under his command; indeed any captain of robbers knew how to bind his people by goodwill to himself.[4] The predictions of Jesus with regard to his own fate were also the subject of various objections. What God or demon or man of understanding, if he knew that such things were to befall him,

[1] i. 39. [2] i. 66, 67. [3] ii. 9. [4] ii. 12.

would not choose to get out of the way rather than thrust himself into them? If he predicted to one of his disciples that he would betray him, and to another that he would deny him, how was it that they were not so much in awe of him as a god, as to be restrained the one from betraying, and the other from denying, him? But if he predicted this as a god, then it was necessary that the prediction should be fulfilled. In this case God made his disciples and prophets, who ate and drank with him—and men do not use to inflict any injury on their companions at table—become guilty of criminal and impious acts.[1] As little can the opponent comprehend how any one could prove himself to be God and the Son of God in such a way as this is said to have been done by Jesus. As the sun manifests itself simply by illuminating all, so ought the Son of God to have done. What did he do in this respect that was worthy of God? did he feel contempt for men, and laugh at the things which happened to him? Why did he not show himself as God, if not before, yet at last? why did he not set himself free from the shame, and revenge himself and his Father on those who were offering him violence? How, the Jew asks, could the Jews be blamed that they did not hold him to be a god, nor, in the conviction that he had suffered for the benefit of men, take such things upon them, when he himself was unable, as long as he lived, to persuade his own disciples to take such a view of his death? Is it not, he argues with the Christians, a contradiction, that they should die with him, while those who were with him in his lifetime, who heard his voice and enjoyed the benefit of his teaching, when they saw him suffer and die, did not die either with him or for him, and were not to be moved to contempt of death?[2] Of all the objections belonging to the same category, it may suffice us here, after quoting so many, to mention those referring to the resurrection of Jesus. How, the Jew asks, is a man to persuade himself that it took place? Granted that it was announced beforehand, there are many others who have found it to be their interest to persuade credulous people by such an allega-

[1] ii. 20.

[2] ii. 30-45.

tion, as Zamolxis, the slave of Pythagoras, among the Scythians, Pythagoras himself in Italy, Rampsinitus in Egypt, Orpheus among the Odrysae, Protesilaus in Thessaly, Hercules in Taenarus, and Theseus. But it must be asked, whether any one who actually died had ever risen again with the same body. How could the Christians believe that the statements of others were mere myths, but that their drama had had, not only the cry upon the cross at the death of Jesus, and the earthquake and the darkness, but further, the most glorious and convincing catastrophe, that he who could not help himself when living rose again when dead, and showed the signs of the death he had endured, and his pierced hands? Who saw it? A fanatical woman, as they themselves allege, or others belonging to the same band of sorcerers. Those who saw it were prepared by their temperament to dream of it, or else they wished it, and the wish took shape in their fancy, as has been the case with many another; or else, what is still more credible, they desired to amaze other people by such a miracle, and to work into the hands of other charlatans. If Jesus had wanted to give a true revelation of his divine power, he ought to have appeared to his enemies, to his judges, in fact to all; or, if it was in his power to give such a proof of his divinity, he ought to have disappeared from the cross at once. From all this and other arguments of the same kind, the Jew draws the conclusion that Jesus was a man, and such a man as truth shows him to have been, and reason allows us to recognise in him.[1]

Celsus himself speaks of the part which is given to the Jew to play as merely the prelude of his dialectical contest with Christianity. The dispute between Jews and Christians is in his eyes so foolish as to be compared with the proverbial dispute about the shadow of an ass. The points in dispute between Jews and Christians are of no importance; both believe that the Holy Spirit has prophesied the advent of a Redeemer of mankind; what they contend about is merely whether the object of the prophecy has come or not. What has now to be done is accordingly to impugn

[1] ii. 55, 63, 68, 79.

those presuppositions on which both Jews and Christians proceed, and with them, of course, the supernatural view of the world on which both these religions are based. Before coming forward with the weightier arguments which belong to this place, he expresses in various turns of thought his general view of Christianity, which is that, generally speaking, he finds nothing in it deserving of respect and acceptance. Christianity as a whole reposes on no real foundation of reason. As the Jews broke away from the Egyptians on account of a religious dispute, so with the Christians also, caprice and the desire of innovation, sedition, and sectarianism compose the element in which they move. Only on these things and on the fear which they inspire in others, especially through the terrifying pictures which they draw of future punishments, do they found their faith.[1] Far more reasonable than the Christians with their belief in Jesus, are the Greeks with their belief in Heracles, Asclepios, Dionysos, who, though men, were because of their meritorious acts accounted gods, with their legends of Aristeas of Proconnesus, the Hyperborean Abaris, Hermotimus of Clazomenae, Cleomedes of Astypalaea, who, though the same things were told of them as of Jesus, were not therefore held to be gods. The cultus which the Christians offered to their Jesus was not better than the cultus of Antinous by Hadrian: they have no reason to laugh at the worshippers of Zeus because his grave was pointed out in Crete; they did not know what the real meaning of the Cretans was, and they themselves worship a buried man.[2] What sort of a thing Christianity was might easily be seen from the circumstance that no man of cultivation, no wise or reasonable man, goes to them; but ignorant and foolish people may go to them with confidence; such persons do they hold to be worthy of their God, and they openly declare that they neither will nor can have any others among them. As the Christians of that age belonged for the most part to the lower orders, Celsus made great use of this fact in collecting the characteristics of Christianity. The Christians appeared to him to belong to the class of those who move about

[1] iii. 5 *sq.*, 14.

[2] iii. 22, 26 *sq.*, 36, 43.

in public places with their low trades, and do not enter any respectable society. In the houses one meets with workers in wool, shoemakers, dyers, uncultivated and unmannered people who do not dare to open their mouths before the masters of the house, men of more cultivation and ability; but if once they get a hold of the children and wives, they speak the most extraordinary things, and represent to them that they should not hold to their fathers and teachers, but only follow them; their fathers and teachers, they say, are under the power of vanity, and can do nothing right; they alone know how one ought to live, and if the children follow them they will be happy and make the house fortunate.[1] Celsus thinks this not too harsh a judgment on the Christians. A still greater reproach which he brings against them is that while in other mysteries it is the pure, those who are not conscious of guilt, those who have lived good and righteous lives, who are summoned to purge themselves from their transgressions, the Christians, on the contrary, promise to every sinner, every fool, every miserable person, that he will be received into the kingdom of God Celsus takes special offence at that preference which Christianity gives to sinners, and its doctrine of the forgiveness of sins. He holds broadly that forgiveness of sins is not possible; every one knows, he says, that those who have confirmed by habit their natural tendency to sin are not changed by punishment, and still less by indulgence. Entirely to change our nature is the most difficult thing of all. Nor does the forgiveness of sins allow of being harmonised with the idea of God. According to the Christian representation of him, God is like those who allow themselves to be softened by pity; out of pity on the wretched he makes it easy to the bad; but the good, who do nothing wrong, he rejects. Christians

[1] iii. 50, 52, 55. Möhler, Bruchstücke aus der Geschichte der Aufhebung der Sclaverei, Gesammelte Schriften und Aufsätze, vol. ii. 1840, p. 85, thinks that the ἐριουργοὶ, σκυτοτόμοι, κναφεῖς, are slaves, and quotes this passage to prove that the Christians were very active and successful in the work of converting slaves. But there is no hint of this in the passage, and it is not correct to suppose that artisans such as those named were invariably slaves in those times. Why the distinctions among them, if the writer merely meant to signify that they were slaves?

think, indeed, that God can do anything; but it is plain that their doctrine cannot obtain the approval of any reasonable man.[1]

Even in these general aspects, then, Christianity fails to commend itself to reason, but its contrariety to reason becomes still more apparent, when inquiry is made as to the ultimate grounds on which Christianity rests. It presupposes a special manifestation and revelation of God; it is to the notion of revelation that one comes ultimately in seeking the reason of Christianity. Celsus attacks this notion with arguments which have been brought forward again and again from his time downwards, to disprove the possibility of revelation in general; and he not only does this, but he reduces the main question at issue to the great difference between the theistic and the pantheistic views of the world, in such a way as to exhibit the whole width of the difference between the two standpoints.

The question at issue between Christians and Jews, whether God, or the Son of God, has already descended to the earth, or is still about to descend, is, he holds, a contemptible subject of contention; the question is, What rational conception can be formed of such a descent of God at all?[2] Why, Celsus asks, did God descend to the earth? To see how things were going with men? But did he not know everything? He knew it, did he? And yet he did not set it right, and could not set it right with his divine power. He could not set it right without some one being sent down for this purpose. Perhaps he wished, since he was still unknown to men, and considered that on that account something was wanting to him, to be known by them, and to see who would and who would not believe. To this Celsus himself gives the answer, that as far as God is concerned he has no need to be known, but that he gives us the knowledge of himself for our profit, and then he asks, why did so long a time elapse before God conceived the notion of setting the life of men right; did he never think of that before?[3] To get still closer to the root of the matter, Celsus goes back to the notion of God. He says he has no intention of saying anything new, but

[1] iii. 63, 65, 70, 71. [2] iv. 2, 3. [3] iv. 8.

only what has long been recognised. God is good, beautiful, blessed; he is the sum of all that is fairest and best. If he descends to men, a change must take place, but this change is a transition from good to bad, from beautiful to ugly, from blessed to unblessed; and who could wish for such a change for himself? Again, while it belongs to the nature of the mortal that it can change and be transformed, the immortal remains always equal to itself. Thus such a change as Christianity presupposes is essentially impossible for God. The Christians think that God can actually change himself into a mortal body, but as this is impossible, we should be driven to think that without actually undergoing it, he gave himself the appearance of such a change for those who saw him. But if this were the case, he would be lying and deceiving. Lies and deceit are always bad, and are only to be used as remedies, either in the case of friends, to cure them when they are ill and out of their senses, or as against enemies, to escape from a danger. But neither can be the case with God.[1] If, however, although the thing is intrinsically impossible, it be supposed that a revelation has actually taken place, it is necessary that we be able to think of some definite object which it was to serve. The believer in revelation can only regard the world from the point of view of teleology; but the teleological view of the world leads to particularism, and particularism cannot be dissociated from an anthropomorphic and anthropopathic conception of God. Such is the train of thought in which the polemic of Celsus proceeds in this part of his work, where the highest question of principle in philosophy comes to be discussed. According to the assertion of the Jews, Celsus says, since life is filled with all sorts of wickedness, it is necessary that a messenger should come from God to punish the wicked and purify all things, in the same way as at the flood. The Christians modify this statement, and say that the Son of God has already been sent because of the sins of the Jews, and that the Jews, because they punished him with death and gave him gall (χολή) to drink, have drawn down upon themselves the wrath (χόλος) of

[1] iv. 14, 18.

God. The scorn of Celsus at once fastens upon this. Jews and Christians alike are compared to a flock of bats, or to ants that creep forth out of their nest, or to frogs sitting round a swamp, or worms holding an assembly in a corner in the mud, and debating on the question which of them are the greatest sinners. It is to us, they say, that God declares everything before it comes to pass; for our sake he leaves the whole world, heaven and earth, and comes to sojourn with us; to us alone does he send his messengers, and he cannot cease sending one messenger after another, because it is of the greatest importance to him that we should be with him always. The worms say: God is, and we are next after him, in all things like to him; he has put everything in subjection to us, earth, water, air, and stars; all things are for our sake, and are intended for our service; but because there are some of us who have erred, God will come, or will send his Son to burn up the wicked and cause the rest to have eternal life with him.[1] This indicates very suggestively the turn which the argument of Celsus here takes with a view to a special attack now to be made on the Old Testament, and a clear demonstration of the anthropopathism of the Christian notion of God as connected with the Old Testament history of revelation. The Jews and Christians, he says, can only be compared with such animals as those above named, inasmuch as the Jews are runaway slaves from Egypt, and have never done anything to distinguish themselves. In order to trace their descent from the most ancient jugglers and beggars, they appeal to ancient ambiguous and mysterious sayings which they explain to ignorant and foolish people. Sitting in their corner in Palestine, they invented, knowing nothing, in their entire want of all culture, of Hesiod and other inspired men, the rudest and most incredible history of the creation. Here Celsus turns aside to the Old Testament history, and ridicules the absurdities which he finds in it. It is true that many Jews and Christians explain it allegorically, but that only proves that they themselves are ashamed of these things.[2] All this, however, is only meant to lend force to the

[1] iv. 23.

[2] iv. 31 *sq.*, 48 *sq.*

contrast which Celsus draws between this materialistic style of thought, in which the nature of God is drawn so low down into the human and the earthly, and the Platonic view, according to which God made nothing that is mortal, but only what is immortal; only the soul is the work of God, the body has another nature. As the nature of the whole is ever one and the same, so there is always the same measure of evils in the world.[1] Evil is not from God, but is attached to matter and to mortal natures, in whose periodical change past, present, and future remain ever the same. Thus man is not the object of the world at all, but all individual existences arise and pass away solely for the preservation of the whole, and what appears to one or other of them to be an evil is not in itself evil if it is of advantage to the whole. In order to refute the teleological position that God made everything for man, which is the basis of the Christian revelation, and to leave no part of it standing, Celsus enters into a detailed comparison of men with the brutes, in which he finds a set-off on the side of the latter for every advantage which he allows to the former; and so far is this argument carried that men are made to stand rather below than above the brutes. At the close of this argument he expresses his general view of the world in the words: "the world, then, is not made for man, for him as little as for the lion or the dolphin or the eagle; it is made solely to be a work of God perfect in itself in all its parts; the individuals in it have reference to each other only in so far as they have reference to the whole. God cares for the whole, his providence forsakes it not, it does not grow worse; nor does God retire for a time into himself; he is angry at men as little as he is angry at apes or flies; all the particular parts of the world have received their definite and appropriate place."[2] This is in the main the view which has continued from the time of Celsus to the most modern times to be the chief opponent of the supranaturalistic belief in revelation, and the development of which, from the rude form which it has with Celsus to a theory founded in philosophy, has only rendered

[1] iv. 54, 62. [2] iv. 99.

it the more dangerous. If the world is a whole, complete in itself, then God and the world are essentially connected with each other, and can only be thought in a relation of immanence to each other. All particular, teleological, supernatural elements at once disappear in the all-embracing unity of the whole, and the notion of revelation loses its whole justification, its root in the philosophy of things being cut away; for if there is no God different from the world, standing above the world, and operating on it by his personal will, then there can be no revelation in the sense of Jews and Christians. God and the world are one in the other: everything moves in the same order, standing fast, once for all, in an eternal circle which ever returns into itself.

Celsus stands here at the height of his polemic against Christianity, as the champion of a view in principle opposed to it. But he fails to maintain this lofty standpoint. The pantheistic view of the world being intimately associated in his mind also with the polytheism of the old religion, he could not escape the question whether the position of polytheism necessarily yielded the same judgment on Christianity as he had been led to form from the standpoint of pantheism. If it cannot be allowed to Christianity that the one supreme God descended to the earth, yet it may be that, in the founder of it, one of those higher superhuman beings appeared, whose existence was taken for granted by Christians, Jews, and heathens equally, although under different names—Jews and Christians calling them angels, and the heathens demons. In this view all the arguments as yet brought against Christianity would fail to prove that it was not of higher divine origin. This is the point at which Celsus stands (v. 2), when he says to the Jews and Christians that neither God nor God's Son had come or would come down to the world; but if they mean angels, they ought to say what they understand under that name, whether gods, or beings of another kind, demons. This, then, we should expect to be the further question now to be discussed; but it is strange that Celsus makes no attempt at a direct answer to the question, but, as if he felt it necessary to concede the possibility that Christianity might

be a divine revelation in this sense, leaves that subject and turns to the contents of the religion of the Jews and Christians, attacking them now on this point, now on that. Especially does he seek to gain advantage over them by contrasting their system with the Greek philosophy and religion. Scarcely have angels been mentioned, when he wonders that the Jews, although they worship heaven and the angels in it, pay no homage to the most exalted and most powerful beings, the sun, moon, and stars.[1] He comes directly after this to the doctrine of the resurrection. That, he says, is a foolish view, that after God had lighted a fire, like a cook, all should be roasted in it, but that they alone should remain unharmed, and even those who were long dead arise with their flesh out of the earth. Worms might hope for that, but what soul of man could desire a corrupted body? Even among the Christians there are some who declare this to be an abominable and impossible notion, and how could a body that has been entirely destroyed be restored to its original nature? Not knowing what to answer to this question they take refuge in the most absurd assertion that to God all things are possible. But the unbecoming is not possible to God, nor does he will what is repugnant to nature; God is the reason of all that is, and can do nothing against reason, nothing against himself.[2] He concedes to the Jews, as he goes on, that they have the same right to their own national legislation as other nations have to theirs, but the Christians he says are deserters from the Jews, and the Jews should by all means give up thinking that they with their laws are wiser and better than others.[3] As if he were only now arriving at his true theme, he goes on to concede to the Christians that their teacher is actually an angel, but insists upon it that he did not come first or alone, but that others came before him, as those also maintain, who

[1] v. 6.

[2] v. 14. It is curious to find so early as this the well-known distinction of contra and supra naturam. God wills nothing *παρὰ φύσιν*, Celsus says. Origen rejoins, cap. 23, that a distinction must be made; if *τὰ κατὰ λόγον Θεοῦ καὶ βούλησιν αὐτοῦ γινόμενα* are not necessarily *παρὰ φύσιν*, then we must say that *πρὸς τὴν κοινοτέραν νοουμένην φύσιν ἐστί τινα ὑπὲρ τὴν φύσιν, ἃ ποιήσαι ἂν ποτε Θεός.*

[3] v. 25, 33, 41.

suppose a higher God and father, distinct from the Creator of the world.[1] What this is intended to convey, and what the point of polemic is in this passage, is not quite clear, at least in Origen's account of it. But this is far from being the case in the further contents of the work, where he passes on to a comparison of Christianity with the Greek and especially the Platonic philosophy, and seeks to show that even if Christianity contains some elements that might prepossess a man of understanding in its favour, it has no monopoly of these, that these things are common property, and have been said far better by the Greeks before, and without those threats and promises about God or a Son of God.[2] Celsus appealed to expressions of Platonism, and extolled Plato highly that he did not promulgate his doctrines as supernatural revelations, nor close the mouth of any one who wished to inquire into the truth of them for himself. He made no demand that one should first of all believe; he did not say: God is so, or so; he has such a Son, and he himself has come down into the world and has spoken with me. On every point, even when the subject of investigation does not admit of further explanation, Plato brings forward reasonable arguments; he does not pretend to be the discoverer of something new, or to have come from heaven to reveal it, but says where he got it. When some of the Christians appeal to this authority and some to that, and all alike insist, "Believe if you wish to be saved, or else go your way," what are those to do who are in earnest in wishing to be saved? are they to appeal to the dice for a decision in what direction they shall turn, and to whom they shall attend?[3] Plato has here, of course, a great superiority, and Celsus also seeks to prove in detail that the Christians borrowed a great deal from Plato, only that they misunderstood and disfigured what was thus taken. In general, the most godless errors of the Christians proceed from their inability to understand the divine mysteries. Under this category Celsus reckons more particularly the Christian doctrine of Satan,

[1] v. 52. [2] vi. 1 *sq.*

[3] vi. 8, 10. Comp. i. 9, where Celsus also brings against the Christians the reproach of ἀλόγως πιστεύειν.

the adversary of God. Even the ancients, Pherecydes, Heraclitus, and others, spoke enigmatically of a war of the gods. The Christians perverted this, and made out of it their doctrine of Satan. The Son of God is overcome by Satan, and warns the Christians of the Satan yet to come, who will accomplish great and wonderful things, and arrogate to himself the honour of God, telling them that they are not to be shaken in their faith when he appears. All this, Celsus says, shows simply that this Satan is a sorcerer or deceiver, like Jesus himself, and naturally enough is afraid of the latter as his rival.[1] The reason, Celsus goes on, why the Christians speak of a Son of God, is that the ancients called the world a child of God, as deriving its existence from God.[2] This leads him to speak of the world and the creation of the world, and of the Mosaic history of creation. In criticising this history he contrasts with the gross anthropomorphisms which he finds to denounce in it his Platonic doctrine of God: that God, as the cause of all existence, is without colour, form, or motion, and exalted above every word and conception. Here he notices an appeal which may be taken from this view. With regard to this notion of God and the question connected with it as to the possibility of knowledge of God, the Christians, he says, may argue, that just because God is so great, and it is so hard to know him, he implanted his Spirit in a body like our own, and sent him to us that we might hear him and learn from him. This, however, only provides Celsus with an opportunity, which he is not slow to use, to cover with derision so sensuous a representation. If God wanted to send his Spirit out from himself, how did he find it necessary to breathe it into the body of a woman? He knew how to make men, and could surely have formed a body for his Spirit without casting it into such filth. If he had appeared in this way coming down suddenly from above, no unbelief would have been possible. But if the divine Spirit was to be in a body, he ought to have surpassed all others in greatness, beauty, and the imposing effect of his whole presence. As it was, he was entirely undis-

[1] vi. 42 *sq.*

[2] vi. 47 *sq.*

tinguished; in fact he was small and ugly. If God like Zeus in the comedy, awaking out of long sleep, formed a desire to deliver the human race from its evils, why did he send what the Christians call his Spirit into a corner; he ought to have animated many such bodies and sent them into the whole world. The comedy-writer, to excite laughter in the theatre, made Zeus, when he awoke from his sleep, send Hermes to the Athenians and Lacedaemonians; but it is much more ridiculous that God should send his Son to the Jews.[1] Celsus then reviews the prophecies of the Old Testament, and makes a number of objections to them. His most serious attack on them, however, consists of an argument suggested by the Gnostic antithesis of the Old and the New Testament. If the divine prophets of the Jews prophesied of Jesus as the Son of God, how can God, speaking through Moses, give the command to accumulate riches, to rule, to replenish the earth, to put enemies to death, to extirpate whole populations, as God himself did under the eyes of the Jews, while his Son, the Nazarene, gives commands exactly opposite to these, closes the access to the Father against the rich, the ambitious, and those who are striving after wisdom and honour, bids men care for food less than the ravens, for clothing less than the lilies, and requires that a man should turn the other cheek to the smiter? Who is lying then, Moses or Jesus; or had the Father, when he sent Jesus, forgotten the commands which he had given through Moses; or had he repented of his own laws, and did he send another messenger with contrary directions?[2] Celsus now puts the question to the Christians, Whither they are going, and what hope they have? As he interprets the doctrine of the resurrection as if the Christians expected to attain in this way to God and to the knowledge of God, this leads him back to the question of the knowableness of God. The Christians, Celsus says, ask again and again, how they are to know and see

[1] vi. 69 *sq.*

[2] vii. 18. Comp. vi. 29, where Celsus accuses the Christians of the inconsistency, that when they are pressed by the Jews they profess to have the same God as they, but when their teacher Jesus sets up a law quite different from that of the Moses of the Jews, they say they have a different God.

God, if there is no mode of knowing him by the senses; what, they say, can be known, except by the perception of the senses? But, says Celsus, it is not the man that asks this, not the soul, but only the flesh. If the cowardly body-loving generation[1] will hear anything, it is necessary to say to it that on these terms only will they see God, that they close their senses and look up with their spirit, that they turn away from the eye of the flesh and open that of the soul. And if they want a leader for this way they should eschew sorcerers and deceivers and those who recommend idols. If they do not do this, they make themselves in every way ridiculous; on the one hand, they blaspheme the approved gods as idols; on the other hand, they worship a god who is in fact more miserable than the very idols, not even an idol, but a dead man, and seek for a father like him. Celsus holds up to them the Platonic dictum about the Creator and Father of the universe, that it is hard to find him, and when one has found him, impossible to express him for all. That is the true way on which divine men seek the truth; a way indeed on which they, with that disposition of theirs, altogether entangled in the flesh, and seeing nothing pure, cannot follow. If they believe that a spirit has come down from God to proclaim the truth, this can be none other than that spirit who reveals those things with which men of the old time, such as Plato, were filled. If they cannot understand these things they should hold their peace and conceal their ignorance, and not call those blind who see, those lame who walk, when they themselves are quite lame and cripple in soul, and live only with their dead body.[2] If, from their love of innovation, they must have some one to adhere to, they should have chosen one who died a noble death, and was worthy of a divine mythos. If Herakles or Asklepios did not please them they might have had Orpheus, who also died a violent death, or Anaxarchus, or Epictetus, of whom sayings were reported such as to fit them

[1] Δεῖλον καὶ φιλοσώματον γένος, vii. 36, which accordingly can only represent God to itself as if he were by nature a σῶμα, and an ἀνθρωποειδὲς σῶμα, vii. 27.

[2] vii. 28, 36, 42, 45.

for the position. Instead of this they make a god out of one who closed the most infamous life with the most shameful death. Jonah in the belly of the whale, or Daniel in the den of lions, would have suited better.[1]

Such were the attacks of an opponent whose skill in dialectical argument and sophism was equal to his talent for sarcasm and ridicule. But after all, there was still one point on which it was necessary for Celsus to come to a clear understanding as to his relations to the Christians, namely, the doctrine of demons. Here there appeared to be a common ground of meeting between Christians and heathens. We have already noticed the connection in which Celsus was led to this point in his polemical demonstration, but we saw that he only glanced at the subject and turned away. And it is hard to understand the reason for such deadly hatred against the Christians in an opponent to whom it ought to have been an easy matter to concede to Christianity a divine origin, if not in the Christian sense, yet in the sense of the pagan doctrine of demons. This, then, is a point which must be set forth more clearly, and so we cannot think it fortuitous that, at the close of his work, Celsus takes up the doctrine of demons for special discussion. The transition to the subject is made in this way. Celsus could not leave unreproved the antipathy of the Christians to temples, altars, and images. The Christians, he says, simply reject images of the gods. If their reason for this is that an image of stone, wood, brass, or gold cannot be a god, this is a ridiculous wisdom: none but a fool holds them to be anything more than mere votive offerings and images. But if they think that there should be no images of the gods, because the gods have another form, the Christians should be the last to say this, for they believe that God made man after his own image, and that man is like him. Their reason then must be that they hold those to whom the images are dedicated to be, not gods, but demons, and are of opinion that a worshipper of God is not at liberty to serve demons. It is clear that they worship neither a god nor a demon, but a

[1] vii. 53.

dead man. But why should demons not be worshipped? Does not everything proceed from divine providence? does not everything that is done, whether by a god or by angels, or by other demons or by heroes, derive its law from the supreme God? Is not each one placed over that, the power of which has been given to him? Thus, according to the assertion of the Christians, he who worships God does not do right in worshipping one who has received his power from God, for it is not possible, as they say, to serve more masters than one.[1] This latter is accordingly the proposition which we have to deal with in considering the doctrine of demons, and their attitude with regard to which will necessarily show whether it is possible for Christians and heathens to come to an understanding on the subject of demons, or not. One would think, indeed, that this question was prejudged by the fact that the Christians connect a totally different notion with demons from that of the heathens, and will not have them considered to be divine beings at all. From the standpoint of the Christians, however, this view of demons is only a secondary view, a deduction; the reason why they are no true Gods is that, in the Christian view in general, nothing divine can be recognised beside the one God. This, accordingly, is the main proposition to be considered, and Celsus expresses it in the evangelical dictum, that no man can serve two masters. Proceeding from this point, he contests the Christian view of demons. The above assertion, he says, can only be set up by those who make a principle of sedition and discord, and who separate and break themselves away from the rest of mankind. He who speaks thus imputes to God his own affections. With men it might very naturally be the case, if the servant of one served another as well, that the former might feel his rights encroached on. But nothing of the sort can be the case with God, and he who worships a number of gods honours the supreme God by honouring those who belong to him.[2] It is impious, Celsus says, to speak of God as the one Lord; this supposes that there is an adversary, and can only bring division and disunion into the kingdom of God. Only then

[1] vii. 68.

[2] viii. 2.

might the Christians perhaps maintain their proposition, if they worshipped no other but the one God, but they pay extravagant honour to one who only appeared lately, and they think that, notwithstanding the worship they pay to his servant, they do not come short of their duty to God. And the fact that the Christians worship God's Son as well as God amounts in itself to a concession that not only the one God is a proper object of worship, but his servants as well. So eager are they for the worship of the founder of their sect, and of him alone, that even if it were proved to them that he was not the Son of God, they would not worship the true God, the Father of all, without him.[1] That the Christians, if they believed the demons to be no gods, should refrain from taking part in public worship, in sacrifices and sacrificial feasts, was very natural, and what Celsus says against them on this head has no further significance. But all the more striking is the claim he makes to have reduced the Christians to the dilemma, that either they must worship the demons, or, giving up the worship of the demons, must renounce all further claim to live. If the Christians shrink from feasting with the demons, one can only wonder how they do not know that on these terms also they are table-companions with the demons, even though there is no slaughtered victim before them. The grain that they eat, the wine that they drink, the fruits they partake of, even the water and the air they breathe, all these things do they receive from the particular demons, to whom, each in his province, the care of every single thing is committed. Either, then, a man must not live at all, and cease to tread this earth, or, if one goes into this life, one must be thankful to the demons who are appointed as overseers over the earth, and bring to them first-fruits and prayers, as long as one lives, that they may continue to be kind to men.[2] Again and again does Celsus set before the Christians the two alternatives: the first that, if they refuse to pay to the guardians of all the honour that is due to them, then they should not live the life of men, should not marry wives nor beget children, nor do any of the other things customary

[1] viii. 11 *sq.*

[2] viii. 28.

in this life, but go away altogether without leaving a seed behind them, in order that such a race may die quite out of the world; the second, that if they marry wives, beget children, enjoy the fruits of the earth, take their share of what life affords, and put up also with the evils that are laid upon them (for nature itself so arranges it that all men have evils to endure; there must be evils as well as good things), then they should also pay to the overseers who are set over these things the honour that is due to them, and fulfil the common duties of life until they are released from their bonds, so as not to appear unthankful towards them. For it is unfair to enjoy what those powers have, without paying them some tribute for it.[1] The Christians did not wish to be ungrateful for daily benefits, as Celsus represented, only they believed their thanks were due, not to demons, but to angels. We also assert, Origen says, that without the presidency of invisible farmers and stewards, not only can the earth not bring forth her fruits, but also that no water can flow in springs and rivers; and that the air cannot without them be kept pure and healthy; but we do not say that the powers who exercise this invisible influence are demons. We know that angels are placed over the fruits of the earth and the beginning of the lives of animals; we praise and extol them as those to whom God has committed what is useful for our race; but we do not pay to them the honour which is due to God.[2] To so narrow a point is the polemic between Christianity and paganism here reduced. If only the Christians could have made up their minds to call their angels demons, and to consider them in that light, this would at once have removed one great cause of offence which the heathens found in Christianity, and they would have been much more inclined to make admissions to Christianity on points which the existence of this point of variance made them still contest. But how could Christianity ever make even this one concession without renouncing itself? Had the Christians worshipped those same beings, whom they called angels, as demons in the sense of the heathens, they would have been assenting to

[1] viii. 55. [2] viii. 31, 57.

heathen polytheism, and taking up a position identifying themselves with the whole mode of view peculiar to the heathen world. The opposition of the Christians to the heathen doctrine of demons is thus simply the point where the profound inner antithesis in which Christianity stands towards heathenism comes out most strikingly into visible form. Their denial of the heathen doctrine of demons was to the Christians the renunciation of the whole heathen view of the world, of that way of thinking which as often as it prevails does away with the absolute notion of the divine, because it does not uphold a strict enough distinction between the divine and the natural, but lets them flow together in one and the same conception, and so become indistinguishable. Thus, slight as the difference might appear to be between the angels of the Christians and the demons of the heathens, yet the antithesis which underlies it is as deep as possible. It is striking to notice how, in that part of his work in which he deals with the doctrine of demons, Celsus plays the part not so much of the assailant of Christianity as of the apologist of heathenism. As if he felt it to be of the utmost importance to convince the Christians here at least of the truth of the heathen religion, he cannot urge upon them too earnestly, how, by denying the heathen doctrine of demons, they deny their inmost consciousness of God, violate the most sacred duties, and show themselves to be men who do not deserve to live in the world at all. Must not the denial of the heathen doctrine of demons have appeared to Celsus to amount ultimately to an open declaration of war against the whole of heathenism, the most outspoken revolt against all that the whole heathen world counted as faith, and as holy usage handed down from the most ancient times? Thus it is very significant that just in this connection he accuses the Christians of a *στάσις*.[1] As rioters and revolters have

[1] viii. 2. Here Origen says of Celsus.—*ἡμᾶς εἰσάγει λέγοντας πρὸς τὴν ἐπαπόρησιν αὐτοῦ θέλοντος ἡμᾶς καὶ τοὺς δαίμονας θεραπεύειν, ὅτι οὐχ οἷόν τε δουλεύειν τὸν αὐτὸν πλείοσι κυρίοις. Τοῦτο δ' ὡς οἴεται στάσεως εἶναι φωνὴν, τῶν ὡς αὐτὸς ὠνόμασεν ἀποτειχιζόντων ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἀποῤῥηγνύντων ἀπὸ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀνθρώπων.* In another passage also Celsus characterises Christianity as a *στάσις*; Christ is *στάσεως ἀρχηγέτης*, viii. 14.

they risen against the whole of the rest of human society, and renounced allegiance to it.[1] In this, however, they have done nothing but what was done by the Jews their ancestors, from whom they again have separated themselves. What gave rise to the Jewish people was simply that in consequence of a στάσις they separated themselves from the Egyptians to whom they originally belonged.[2] Sedition, division, sectarianism is thus the character which Judaism and Christianity have in common. All that drew down upon the Jews the hatred of the heathens, on account, as Tacitus says,[3] of their contrarii ceteris mortalibus ritus, applied to the Christians, only in a much greater degree; inasmuch as their στάσις was a new and a very much worse one superadded to the old. With a Celsus indeed the natural antipathy of the heathens to the Jews had so far been softened, as to allow of his placing them on the same line with the other nations, and wishing their religion, whatever its nature might be, to be recognised as a national cultus.[4] The reason for this was obviously that a people with such a national history as that of the Jews had a historical justification for itself which no one could deny: but what a distant prospect was it then to the time when the Christians should be able to claim a similar historical prescription? Till Christianity had at last succeeded in achieving such an existence, the Christians could only be regarded as raisers of sedition and deserters, as those who had fallen away as heretics from the Catholic body of mankind. As it was impossible to explain how, with such an origin, Christianity had yet obtained such importance as it was necessary

[1] Indeed they have gone so far as to conspire against society. That the Christians had no altars, images, or temples, was held to be πιστὸν ἀφανοῦς καὶ ἀπορρήτου κοινωνίας σύνθημα, to be done in accordance with a secret agreement. viii. 17; comp. i. 1.

[2] Compare iii. 4 *sq.*; iv. 31; ii. 1. According to Celsus' view dissent is so essentially a part of the character of the Christians, that he says, iii. 9, if all men were willing to become Christians, they themselves would be unwilling that it should be so.

[3] Hist. v. 4. For, profana illic omnia, quae apud nos sacra, rursum concessa apud illos, quae nobis incesta.

[4] Orig. *op. cit.* v. 25.

even then to concede to it, men were driven to assert that the lowest acts of deceit and craft had been the means through which Christianity had been introduced into the world.

Thus, although Christianity is no longer an exitiabilis superstitio, infamous on account of its flagitia,[1] yet its nature is simply deceit and delusion. But who is the originator of this deceit? Where there are deceivers there must be also deceived. There is no doubt that in the great mass of the Christians, Celsus saw simply the victims of deceit. According to the mean opinion which he had of the Christians, as uncultivated people, belonging to the lower orders, easily moved to materialistic expectations, they formed exactly the soil in which a great and far-reaching delusion might spread. Now on inquiring as to the source of this deception only two alternatives are possible: Was Jesus himself the originator of it, or is it to be charged only on his disciples? Celsus declared the disciples of Jesus to be deceivers of the worst sort, as in fact he saw in the whole society of the adherents of Jesus after his death a band of sorcerers who in all probability intended and arranged to spread abroad in the world the lie that Jesus had risen from the dead.[2] The narratives of the Gospel history Celsus considered to be for the most part the inventions of the evangelists, who had not even the skill to veil their fiction under an appearance of likelihood. Like those who in a drunken fit lay hands upon themselves, they changed the original copy of the Gospels three or four times, or even oftener, in order to deny what had been proved to be untrue in them. Especially are such narratives as that of the birth and the baptism of Jesus declared by Celsus to be devoid of all credibility. Who, he says, saw such a phenomenon as that at the baptism, or heard such a voice from heaven? who but those

[1] It is remarkable that there is no mention in the work of Celsus of all those injurious accusations which even Tertullian refuted in such detail. Celsus knew Christianity too accurately, and was too much in earnest, to pay heed to such charges. This is clearly indicated by Origen, vi. 27, 40. Compare also Eusebius E. H. iv. 7, where it is said expressly that in a short time those rumours completely died away.

[2] ii. 55.

whose interests led them to put forward such statements? It is also a mere invention of the disciples that Jesus foresaw and foretold all that was to happen to him.[1] But the disciples are not the sole originators of the delusion by which Christianity was introduced into the world, the charge necessarily falls on Jesus himself as well. If it was not till after the death of Jesus that the disciples fell away from the law of their fathers and founded a new sect, yet they were induced to do so by Jesus himself, who ridiculously misled them.[2] The first deception proceeded from Jesus, and when Celsus represents him as having learned in Egypt those magic arts through which he afterwards drew attention to himself in his own country, he can have seen nothing but one great work of deception in Jesus' whole activity.[3] This more than anything else is characteristic of the attack which Celsus made on Christianity, that, refusing to recognise in it anything great and fitted to awaken reverence, he made Jesus himself a deceiver,[4] and was unable, as it appears, to find any other account of Christianity than that it owed all its growth and its successes simply to fraud and deception.

And yet we can scarcely fail to see, that the deep contempt with which Celsus looks down upon Christianity, and the bitter mockery with which he overwhelms it in such abundant measure, are in fact feigned, and not the true expression of the writer's mind. Can there be any greater testimony to the importance which Christianity had by this time obtained in the eyes of the public of thinking men, than just the fact that a man like Celsus, undoubtedly one of the most cultivated and enlightened, the best-informed and most competent to judge, of those living in that age,

[1] ii. 26 *sq.*; i. 40; ii. 13. [2] ii. 1.

[3] Celsus allows the miracles of Jesus, but places them in the same class with those of the sorcerers, and of the things accomplished by those who having learned from the Egyptians for a few obols practised their lofty arts in the middle of the market, drove out demons, blew away diseases, called up the souls of heroes, displayed well-covered tables, and caused things without life to move as if alive, i. 68.

[4] Celsus characterises Jesus as a deceiver throughout. In addition to the passages cited above see also ii. 49; vi. 42.

thought the new phenomenon of such importance as to make it the subject of a most careful and elaborate investigation? However much he found in it that was objectionable and worthless, absurd and meaningless, sensuous and materialistic; though he could not attribute any distinctive value to it as a whole, either in a philosophical or in a religious point of view; yet, to combat it successfully, he felt himself compelled to resort to every means that Greek philosophy offered, and to take up in opposition to it no less lofty a position than that of a Platonic philosopher. And if the main point of the controversy came to this, that the Christians refused to worship the demons, and would hear nothing of the popular mythical religion, how could he put so much earnestness into the accusation which he brought against them, when to himself, with his philosophical views, belief in the old gods could not possibly be anything more than a tradition which had become more or less detached from his consciousness? In spite of this, it is true, his standpoint prevented him from seeing in Christianity anything but a work of deception; but it is something that by this time it had come to be held for nothing worse; and we may take it as a proof of the great importance which attached to it in the mind of the age, that people should think there was no explanation but that of imputing to deception a phenomenon which, the greater its influence was, appeared the more enigmatical. What is this but saying that it had come to be a power in the world by a secret and mysterious road of which no further explanation could be given?

Whether or not the Celsus with whom we are acquainted from the work of Origen was the Celsus who was a friend of Lucian, at any rate Lucian may be placed by the side of Celsus in this respect, that from his works also we are able to form a more definite conception how Christianity was reflected in the heathen consciousness of that age, and assimilated that consciousness to itself more and more, losing by degrees the abrupt and repellent aspect under which it had hitherto been regarded in that quarter. Lucian, too, had a certain interest in Christianity; he knew, if not

perhaps the writings of the Christians, yet the principal facts of the gospel history, and the manners and customs of the Christians, and had formed an opinion of his own on the general character of Christianity.[1] His standpoint, however, was an entirely different one from that of Celsus. In spite of all the mockery and derision with which he treated Christianity, Celsus took up with all seriousness the task of refuting it, and as a Platonist did what he could to maintain the heathen view of the world against the opposite Christian view. An Epicurean, on the contrary, to whom the heathen belief in the gods had come to be nothing more than a subject for his wit and pleasantry, could not possibly feel any such interest. He saw in Christianity merely a phenomenon which afforded new material for that satirical picture of his age which in many of his writings he aimed at setting forth. Celsus, when seeking to give a vivid notion of the deception in which he judged that Christianity had its origin, placed it on the same line with other phenomena in which fraud and deception played the principal part. With Lucian the main point of view from which to regard Christianity was its affinity with such phenomena of the time. Christianity was in his eyes simply one more of those aberrations, perversions, and delusions of which he beheld so many in the motley confusion of his age. Thus, what chiefly attracted him in Christianity and in the Christians was that side on which it tended towards eccentricity, and afforded him most readily a subject for satire. The work of Lucian which has here to be considered, treats of the history of the life and death of the Cynic philosopher, Peregrinus Proteus. Christianity is indeed one of the principal subjects of this work, but the plan is such that Christianity is only treated of in association with the phenomena of like nature with which Lucian wished to classify it. The view which is taken of Christianity gives special prominence to

[1] Compare my work, Apollonius von Tyana und Christus, Tüb. 1832, p. 134 *sq.* In the Drei Abhandlungen, p. 130-137. See also A. Planck, Lucian und das Christenthum. Stud. und Krit. 1851, p. 826 *sq.*, especially on Lucian's acquaintance with the writings of the Christians, p. 886 *sq.*

two features of it: the one, the credulity of the Christians in which is to be found a very simple explanation of the origin of their religion; the other, their fanaticism with regard to martyrdom.

After committing many disgraceful crimes, and being at last obliged to flee from his country on account of having strangled his father, Peregrinus Proteus comes to the Christians in Palestine. At first he learns the strange wisdom of the Christians, but soon he outstrips his teachers, the priests and scribes, to such an extent that they become as pupils compared with him. Hereupon he becomes a prophet, the president of their cultus and their assemblies, and combines everything in his own person. In this capacity he expounds their books and composes many books himself, till at last he is worshipped by them as a god, and considered as their legislator. The part which he is thus made to play is evidently intended to form a parody of the history of Jesus, and to show how easy it is among people like these to attain to the position of a sect-leader. Only one thing was beyond the reach of Peregrinus: as the Christian community was already in existence when he entered it, he could not raise himself to the same height as Jesus. For they still indeed continued to worship that great man who was nailed to the post in Galilee, because he had brought these new mysteries into existence. Lucian goes on with his account of the sojourn of Peregrinus among the Christians, and narrates that he was cast into prison for being a Christian. This fact, however, added greatly to his reputation, and only strengthened his appetite for adventure and notoriety. The Christians regarded his imprisonment as a great misfortune, and took a great deal of trouble to effect his release, or at least to alleviate his hardships. From the cities of Asia came embassies of Christian churches to support and comfort him, and Peregrinus obtained a great deal of money on account of his incarceration. The object of all this is to work out the character of the Christians, with which view Lucian lays particular emphasis on the great industry with which they work at anything that they have once come to regard as a public matter. As quickly as possible they give away

all that they have, for these poor people have a conviction that they are wholly immortal, with soul and body, and will live for ever. On this account they also despise death, and most of them give themselves up to it voluntarily. Then their first lawgiver persuaded them that they are all brothers among each other, if by joining Christianity they deny the heathen gods and worship that sophist who was nailed to the post, and live according to his laws. These characteristic features, however, as well as the others, are referred by Lucian to that main characteristic of the Christians, that their credulity makes them become far too easily the prey of a deceiver. As they desire to be brothers, they contemn all property alike, and hold it to be common to them; all such tenets being simply accepted by them without accounting to themselves for their faith. Thus, if a deceiver comes to them, a clever man, who knows how to manage things, in a short time he may become very rich, and then turn the simpletons into ridicule.[1] Thus Lucian, as well as Celsus, found the ultimate explanation of Christianity in a deception; only he took no further trouble to trace the source and nature of this deception, and made up his mind, though not without a measure of pity for them, to regard the Christians as rather deceived than deceivers.

The second point with which Lucian was particularly struck in the Christians was their eagerness for martyrdom. To this, however, he allowed no very great value, attributing it partly to fanatical exaggeration, partly to the idle affectation of people who wished to make a name for themselves and excite some sensation in the world. The great scene in which Peregrinus meets his end, by plunging himself into the flames of a pyre before the people assembled at Olympia, is doubtless a pure fiction,[2] and can only be

[1] De morte Peregrini, cap. 11-13.

[2] This fact is not vouched for by any writer before Lucian or independent of him. Comp. Planck, p. 834 *sq.*, 843. Gregorovius, Geschichte des römischen Kaisers Hadrian und seiner Zeit, 1851, p. 254 *sq.*, regards the narrative of Lucian as fact and genuine history, without so much as asking the question whether what we have before us here is not either entirely or in part a piece of genuine Lucianic fiction. How he can do this I fail to understand. It is in any case, of

intended as a caricature of certain phenomena of his time; and in this connection nothing suggests itself to us more naturally than the martyrdoms of the Christians, scenes which were just at that time, during the persecutions under Marcus Aurelius, attracting public attention. What was the object of bringing him into such close connection with the Christians, unless to represent him as their disciple in this the principal incident of the adventures he goes through? Even at the earlier period when he was taken prisoner among the Christians by the heathen magistrate, the circumstance is represented as having done much to strengthen for the rest of his life the tendency which he had to seek in adventures that notoriety which was ever his great object. On that occasion the governor of Syria judged that there was no necessity even for whipping him, and released him simply for this reason, that being a man of a philosophical turn of mind he did not wish to give him any opportunity to satisfy his idle love of notoriety. Here the reference to the Christian desire for martyrdom is so unmistakable that the subsequent scene, where what might have happened then does actually come to pass under much more striking circumstances, falls naturally under the same point of view. It is true that Peregrinus is represented as having left the Christians and Christianity and is described merely as a Cynic, but this does not prevent us from seeing in his death a reference to Christianity. Lucian's whole method of treatment points to the conclusion, that

course, a picture of the time, even though the main features of the story were not actually combined in the person of a particular individual. Gregorovius places Peregrinus Proteus beside the wizard Alexander of Abonoteichos and the Pythagorean saint Apollonius, as the third form representing that absolute derangement of the reason and boundless fantasticality which had a place amidst the chaotic dissolution of the elements of morality and religion in the period of the emperors. But in the case of Alexander of Abonoteichos also how much has evidently been added to the facts by Lucian's exaggerating and idealising treatment of the subject, as he wished to give a clear and telling picture both of the charlatanry of such a deceiver and of the incredible gullibility of the public by such acts. The mean opinion of the Christians which he held and expressed in the Peregrinus did not hinder him from speaking of them in his Alexander as infidels and atheists, and placing them on the same level with the Epicureans whom he so much esteemed.

in speaking of the Christian eagerness for martyrdom, he was not referring merely to what was specifically Christian. What he wished to represent was a characteristic which could not be omitted in a general picture of the age, the empty desire to create sensation and to cut a part in the world by any, even the most extravagant, means; or a new form of the Cynicism of the age which set itself so deliberately and so impudently to attract attention. Marcus Aurelius condemned those who were ready to die when their readiness was not founded upon their own convictions, but proceeded from pure refractoriness as with the Christians: because the wise man must go out of the world unheated, with reason and with dignity, and without tragic pomp (ἀτραγῴδως).[1] It was just the fanaticism of the Christians, taking pleasure in this tragic pomp, of which Lucian gives the satiric delineation in his Peregrinus, the hero of this extraordinary drama of adventure being represented as a lofty and tragical character, and more remarkable than all the heroes of Sophocles and Aeschylus. This fanatical contempt for death, this eagerness for martyrdom with which the Christians even threw down a challenge to the heathens, was by this time a characteristic feature of the Christians, though even Celsus made little mention of it.[2] It must have been growing more conspicuous at this time; since, under Marcus Aurelius, persecutions were frequent, and in addition to this the punishment by fire was often employed so as to allow the heroism of the Christian martyrs, as in the case of the Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna and of many others, to appear in its full splendour. The name of Christians or Galileans was even turned into a kind of proverb; they were spoken of as people with whom a madness has become a matter of custom, which does things that are only possible to

[1] Πρὸς ἑαυτόν, ii. 3.

[2] Only in Orig. c. Cels. viii. 49 does Celsus taunt the Christians with the inconsistency of hoping for the resurrection of the body, as if there were nothing better or more noble than τὸ σῶμα, and that they at the same time αὐτὸ ῥίπτειν εἰς κολάσεις, ὡς ἄτιμον.

reason by means of the insight it has gained into the laws by which the universe is governed.[1]

Though Lucian looks down upon Christianity with the same disdain and contempt as Celsus, yet the temper and the view are changed. We may consider him as the representative of those who cherished an Epicurean indifference for religion, and who could not only look with more calmness on such a phenomenon as Christianity, but could seek to find a place for it in their general view of the world by considering its analogy with other phenomena of the same kind and with similar pathological conditions of mankind. What obtains utterance in him is not the bitter hatred of a Celsus who refuses to see in the Christians anything but a band of deceivers who have formed a sort of conspiracy for the destruction of the rest of human society. In his eyes they are merely simpletons, credulous people, fanatics, completely under the power of a fixed idea, and therefore equally capable of playing a part of utter recklessness, and of doing acts of the greatest self-devotion. Thus a process of reconciliation has in spite of appearances been at work, and has gone so far that Christianity is regarded as at least nothing worse than what may be observed in many another phenomenon of the age. Yet, when it is sought to account for the ultimate origin of Christianity, it is still held to be derived from nothing but deceit and delusion. Celsus plainly called Jesus a deceiver, while Lucian called him a sophist,[2] but it is not likely that the latter term was used with the intention of conveying a more favourable opinion. A change of view could only come about when, as a point of contact with Christianity had been found pathologically, a side was also found on which it could be understood by the religious mind, and by means of which it might be taken up into

[1] Arrian de Epicteti dissert. 4. 7 : *περὶ ἀφοβίας. Ὑπὸ μανίας μεν δύναταί τις οὕτω διατεθῆναι πρὸς ταῦτα, καὶ ὑπὸ ἔθους οἱ Γαλιλαῖοι, ὑπὸ λόγου δὲ καὶ ἀποδείξεως οὐδεὶς δύναται μαθεῖν, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς πάντα πεποίηκε τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ;*

[2] On the meaning of this expression in Lucian (he also uses it of Jesus in his Philopseudes, c. 16) see Planck, p. 873 *sq.* He uses it in both a good and a bad sense, and it is thus quite appropriate, as Lucian certainly did not mean to speak so ill of Jesus as Celsus had done.

the general mode of view. In this respect nothing was to be hoped for from the side of Epicureanism, everything savouring of religion being indifferent to that system; and just as little could anything be expected from Stoicism, the Christian fanatical eagerness for death being so repugnant to that school that the Stoics despised Christianity as un-Roman. Platonism, however, little though it appeared prepared for such a concession in such a one as Celsus, was universal enough and broad enough at heart to concede to Christianity, just at that point at which this was of most importance, the divinity of its origin.

The way for this great change was prepared by that religious eclecticism and syncretism which, arising on the basis of the oriental cultus of the sun, became diffused in the Roman empire immediately after the age of the Antonines, and to which even some of the rulers of the empire were devoted with fanatical religiosity. The positive proof of the influence which this syncretism exercised on the view taken of Christianity by the heathen world is to be found in the life of Apollonius of Tyana, written by Philostratus,[1] a work which occupies an important position at this point of our history. It came into existence in the first decades of the third century, in the circle of the empress Julia Domna, the wife of the emperor Septimius Severus.[2] We can scarcely be wrong in imputing to that lady the same way of thinking on religious matters which subsequently appeared in such a marked manner in several members of the imperial house and of her family. The subject of the work is the magician Apollonius of Tyana, who is known to us also from other sources to have lived in the second half of the first century. He is said to have excited attention chiefly in the reign of Domitian as a prophet and a worker of miracles. There is very little heard of him elsewhere, but with Philostratus he appears in a highly idealised narrative, which compels us to look for some special motive. Looking at the features with which he is portrayed, we are left in little doubt as to the object which Philostratus had in view in the composition of his work. The somewhat ambiguous

[1] Comp. my work mentioned p. 168. [2] Vita Apoll. i. 3. Comp. Vita Soph. ii. 30. 1.

personage of the magician and prophet is here transformed, in a word, into a moral and religious world-reformer, who, if he were actually historical, would have transcended all that the ancient world has to show in the way of such endeavours. The activity to which, according to this narrative, he devoted his whole life, has throughout a religious tendency. Wherever we see him appear it is his most earnest endeavour to diffuse a correct knowledge of the gods and of divine things, to teach the mode of worship pleasing to the gods, to awaken love for the divine, and the disposition to worship the gods in piety. Accordingly he everywhere preferred to discourse on religious subjects, and in his constant wanderings he passed by no sacred place which either could excite pious feelings by the memories connected with it, or was still made choice of by the gods and heroes for the revelation of their visible nearness and presence. He visited all the temples and loved to stay in them, and held discourses in them which produced such an effect that the gods were more zealously worshipped, and men flocked to the place, as if they expected to receive from the gods more abundant gifts. With the same earnestness did he insist on virtue and morality. Wherever he appeared he exercised his influence in a way deserving of the highest respect to bring back an enervated age to the severer and purer customs of antiquity, and so to lay a firmer foundation for the wellbeing of the states. Especially did he recommend the knowledge of self, and careful attention to the moral judgment which utters itself in the voice of conscience. The standard of moral judgment he placed in the idea of righteousness, but he declared expressly that to do no wrong could not be held equivalent to righteousness. With these doctrines and principles he sought to give to his activity the greatest possible extension and universality. He appeared everywhere, acting always in the same way, and his unintermitted wanderings through all the lands of the then known world could have no other purpose than to make the wisdom which he taught and the benefits he hoped to effect for the whole of mankind the common property of all. Thus his activity is in itself a testimony

to the universal character of his ideas. His doctrine, moreover, had nothing secret or particular in it; his discourses were public, and any one who wished it might be present at them. It is true that he had a smaller circle of disciples about himself, but he does not seem to have made any very radical distinction in respect to the instruction that he gave them. His notion with regard to the disciples whom he kept by his side was in general to secure by means of them the universal recognition and firm establishment in the future of those doctrines and principles by which he expected that a new impetus would be given to moral and religious life. It lay in the nature of the case that, as a moral and religious reformer, he should enter into a certain opposition to the world around him. The object of his activity was to correct, to the utmost of his power, the ignorance and indifference in divine things, the moral defects and infirmities, which prevailed among his contemporaries, and the various aberrations which he saw in individuals here and there, and thus, as he believed, to remove the disproportion in which the men of his age stood to the idea which he considered ought to be realised in human life. His work had however a political tendency as well as a religious, and this gave it a still more distinctive character. His public life falls in the period when the tyranny of Domitian was spreading terror through the Roman world. Apollonius opposed the tyranny with the courage of a sage whom no danger could daunt, and appeared as the champion of freedom, calling to his aid in that cause all the doctrines and principles that true philosophy can offer. Yet for a reformer of manners and religion, it is not enough that he should devote his public activity to the idea which inspires him; he must first of all bring it to view in a living and concrete form in his own person. And in the person of Apollonius, according to the picture drawn of him by Philostratus, such an ideal actually did appear. In this respect the following traits deserve special attention. Intellectually his higher knowledge raised him far above common men, and he in fact united in himself, as a common focus, all the knowledge of his time, both in

human and in divine things. So, in point of practice, he was an equally perfect sage. From his youth up he had devoted himself with inexpressible mysterious love to the Pythagorean philosophy, and he followed the mode of life which that philosophy prescribed to its votaries as alone holy, pleasing to God, and worthy of the wise man, more strictly than any one else. But the wise man made perfect cannot appear in his true greatness until he has overcome the terrors of death, and so this could not be wanting in the life of Apollonius. He did not put away from him the thought of giving himself up as a martyr to the cause of freedom, and by his intrepidity and his contempt for death he disarmed the cruelty of the tyrant Domitian. All these things combined—his extraordinary knowledge of divine and human things, the spotless purity which produced in him a visible representation of the fairest union of all the virtues, and the most undoubted ideal of moral perfection, the noble determination of his whole life to work for the good of mankind, the courage in the presence of death with which he defended the cause of freedom against tyranny, and in the consciousness of duty was resolved to offer up his life,—all this made him appear to be divine and more than human. The divine element in his nature attested itself in his gift of prophecy and miracle; and, in addition to this, the miraculous occurrences which attended both his birth and the end of his life, cast a peculiar glory on his person. Thus it appears no more than natural when we find that even his contemporaries regarded him as a god.

When, however, we consider, on the one hand, how unhistorical and how idealised the whole picture is, so that we cannot help thinking that it was drawn up with some particular intention; and on the other hand, what a striking agreement there is in all the main features of the ideal between Apollonius and Christ, and how in many of his details Philostratus betrays a familiar acquaintance with the history of the Gospels, we are driven to ask what intention this companion picture was meant to serve. There is nothing to point to a purely hostile tendency. If what

Philostratus meant by his picture was simply that the Christians had no reason to think their Christ so extraordinary and unique a phenomenon, and that the heathen world was able to confront their ideal with another not unlike it, even this might certainly be regarded as an opposition to Christianity. But we have to consider, first of all, how great a concession is made in the mere fact that the ideal thus set up is nothing but a counterpart to the original which is to be found in Christianity. Looking back to Lucian and Celsus, where do we find the faintest recognition of such a superiority in Christianity? As if every prejudice against it were now overcome, not only is there a concession that Christianity possesses something exalted and divine, but the contention is simply that the distinction is not peculiar to Christianity; and all that the heathen world can furnish to make up a companion picture is called into requisition. The philosophy which is attributed to Apollonius declares itself to be Pythagorean; and there can be no doubt that the favour which Pythagoreanism began to enjoy, even at the beginning of the Christian era, and its growing reputation since then, furnish the chief part of the explanation of the great change of the mind and feelings of the heathen world with regard to Christianity. In the work of Philostratus, studiously as it avoids every hint as to its relation to Christianity, that change stands before us as an accomplished fact. As philosophy began itself to take a religious direction, and sought to appease that yearning after a higher revelation which the negativity of the results reached up to this time had produced in her, from the traditions of antiquity and the doctrines of the religions of the East,[1] it could not but grow more inclined to believe in a doctrine which came forward with a claim to be a divine revelation, and which, having already existed for two hundred years, could not be regarded as a new thing, as a mere growth of yesterday. In this way there proceeded out of Neo-Pythagoreanism particularly that syncretism which held that the way to approach most nearly to absolute truth was to unite as far as possible in one view the different forms of

[1] Comp. Zeller, die Philosophie der Griechen, vol. iii. p. 490 *sq.*

religion, so far as any higher divine element appeared to be revealed in them, then letting them all stand side by side with the same relative claim to truth, and regarding them all alike as rays from one and the same principle of light. Thus Christianity also took its proper place by the side of the other religions. Honour was paid to its founder as to the founders of other religious institutions, and other wise men of antiquity were placed beside him. It was held to be quite fitting to confront with what was recognised as high and divine in Christianity other systems with equal claims, or, as some might think, even higher and more perfect, found in the heathen world; it being quite forgotten in the meantime that Christianity itself must claim quite a different relation from this to heathen religion and philosophy. But when Platonism, which from the very beginning stood in so close a relation to Pythagoreanism, had gained a more systematic development in its new form, and had risen to be the ruling philosophy of the age, it could not but feel the necessity of coming to some more distinct understanding with Christianity, and of defining more exactly both what elements of the latter it approved and recognised, and what it was obliged to regard as an opposition in principle. In Celsus we saw the outspoken assailant, in Philostratus the doubtful syncretistic mediator. We are now brought to the Neo-Platonist, *Porphyrius*, the chief representative of the third and only remaining possible form of the intellectual process here running its course—a form in which we see the religious consciousness of the heathen world as powerfully attracted by Christianity on the one side as repelled by it on the other.

Although Porphyrius has to be considered under both of these aspects, yet he is the writer whom the Fathers of the Church regarded as the bitterest and most irreconcilable opponent of Christianity.[1] His work against the Christians, written in fifteen books, was a still more celebrated attack than that of Celsus, and so much were the Christians alive to its importance, that the most

[1] Ὁ ἀσπονδος ἡμῶν πολέμιος, ὁ πάντων ἡμῖν ἔχθιστος, he is called, *e.g.* by Theodoret. Gr. affect. cur. disp. 10. 12. Ed. Schulz, vol. iv. pp. 954, 1040.

distinguished Doctors of the Church at that time composed detailed and elaborate replies to it. This was done by Methodius of Tyre, by Eusebius of Cæsarea, and by Apollinaris of Laodicea. The attack of Porphyrius on Christianity was not so comprehensive and manysided, nor was it in the same degree directed against the whole Christian view of the world, as that of Celsus; but the better was he able to fix upon those points with regard to which no exception could be taken to the cogency of the facts on which his arguments insisted. The replies have been lost, as well as the work itself, and we have but a very limited acquaintance with the work, which the Christians overwhelmed with their hatred; but this is the impression which we gain from the few fragments of it which have been preserved to us. Porphyrius attacked chiefly the writings of the Christians, and directed his critical acuteness to prove contradictions in them, which seemed at once to do away with the reputation of being divine which those works enjoyed. As an example of this he fastened on the conflict of the two apostles, mentioned in Galatians ii., reproaching one apostle with his error, and the other with his contentiousness, and from the whole narrative drawing the conclusion that if the heads of the Church disagreed so violently with one another, their whole doctrine could only rest on invention and lies.[1] In the Gospel history itself he found fault with the conduct of Jesus, John vii. 8, compare with 14, which he said was ambiguous and inconsistent.[2] The 12th book of the work was specially famous. Here Porphyrius dealt with the predictions of the prophet Daniel, and tried to show that the Book of Daniel was not written by the prophet whose name it bears, but by a later writer who lived in Judea in the

[1] Comp. Hieronymus in the procemium of his Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians.

[2] Hieron. dial. c. Pelag. ii. 17. He seems to have found in other parts of the Gospel history also much that was untrue and designedly falsified. Comp. Hier. Ep. 57 ad Pammach., c. 9; Quaest hebr. in Gen., init. In the Acts he interpreted the words of Peter to Ananias and Sapphira, v. 4 *sq.*, not as a prophetic denunciation of a judgment of God, but as imprecari mortem. Jerome (in his Epist. ad Demetriadem, in Semler's edition of Pelag. Epist. ad Demetr. p. 156) cites this as a foolish saying of Porphyrius (ut stultus Porphyrius calumniatur).

time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Daniel, he said, did not predict the future, but this later writer narrated things that were past. All that he says up to the time of Antiochus contains true history, but what comes down past that date is untrue, as he did not know the future.[1] In his criticism of the Mosaic history and of Jewish antiquities, the subjects dealt with in his fourth book, he blames severely the Commentators, and particularly Origen, for their allegorising, by which they foist transcendent mysteries into the clear meaning of the Mosaic writings.[2] Especially characteristic of his method of attack are the three following dialectical questions: If Christ calls himself the way of salvation, grace, and truth, and causes the souls which believe in him to expect their return from him alone, what did men do during all the centuries before Christ? Why do the Christians reject sacrifices, if the God of the Old Testament instituted them? What relation is there between sin and eternal punishment, if Christ says, With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again?[3]

These objections show us how sharp the polemic of Porphyrius was; he doubtless brought forward many others like them, and in fact his whole style of argument, so far as we are acquainted with it, shows the spirit of a Celsus. Yet it was by no means his intention, as it was that of Celsus, to pronounce a purely negative judgment on Christianity. What he blamed and rejected in Christianity was placed to the account of that Christianity alone which even then was no longer the genuine and original religion. A way had now to be found to combine that respect and sympathy which Neo-Platonism could not withhold from Christianity, with the standpoint which heathenism had occupied in its opposition to Christianity, and was still to continue to occupy. The way chosen to gain this end was to distinguish the teacher from the

[1] Jerome in the procem. to his Commentary on the Prophet Daniel.

[2] Euseb. E. H. vi. 19. He said of the allegorising method of interpretation of these expositors of the Old Testament, that it so captivates the soul with its high-flying imagination as to deprive it of all sound judgment.

[3] August. Ep. 102, or Sex Quaest. contra Paganos expositae; qu. 2, 3, 4. Comp. Jer. Ep. 133 ad Ctesiph., c. 9.

disciples. In place of a merely negative dialectic and polemic which sought to demonstrate the falseness and futility of Christianity as a whole, there now appeared a criticism which set itself to the task of distinguishing the original truth from the elements of untruth and falsehood which had gathered round it. Not that Christianity was even now to be absolved from the charge of deception: there was no way of accounting for the importance it had gained in the world except on this hypothesis; but the charge of deception did not now attach to the founder himself, it only extended to the sphere of those who came after him, who had disfigured his true doctrine and given to it these false adjuncts which could not but rouse the religious mind of the heathens in repulsion and abhorrence against it. The Neo-Platonists were the first to take up this position with regard to Christianity, which may with justice be called a position of criticism, inasmuch as it had the same tendency as that of every critical interpretation of Christianity in after times; it being the first task of such an interpretation to inquire what part of Christianity is the essential and original truth of it, and what has been added to it in other ways. They were those "vani Christi laudatores et Christianae religionis obliqui obtrectatores," who, as Augustine says,[1] "continent blasphemias a Christo, et eas in discipulos ejus effundunt." What Celsus charged upon Jesus himself is now laid at the door of his disciples only. It was only they who denied the heathen gods, and took up so hostile a relation to the popular heathen religion. Jesus himself was far from doing this; he believed in the gods, honoured them according to heathen custom, and performed by their aid in theurgical fashion those miracles by which he attained so great celebrity.[2] As the disciples said a thing about their

[1] De Consensu Evangelistarum, i. 15.

[2] The Neo-Platonists said of Jesus (Augustine, *op. cit.* c. 34): Nihil sensisse contra Deos suos, sed eos potius magico ritu coluisse et discipulos ejus non solum de illo fuisse mentitos, dicendo illum Deum, per quem facta sunt omnia, cum aliud nihil quam homo fuerit, quamvis excellentissimae sapientiae, verum etiam de Diis eorum non hoc docuisse, quod ab illo didicissent. They spoke also of writings composed by Christ, which contain "eas artes quibus eum putant illa fecisse miracula, quorum fama ubique percrebuit," *op. cit.* cap. 9.

Master in this particular of which he never thought himself, it was also a false statement on their part that he called himself God. To concede divine dignity to Jesus would have been giving Christianity too great an advantage over heathenism; but the Neo-Platonists were perfectly ready to recognise and honour him as one of the wisest and most distinguished of men.[1] Even this distinction, however, Jesus was made to share with the wise and godlike men of heathen antiquity, and the parallel was not meant to raise him but rather to cast him into the shade. With a like object to that which Philostratus had in view in writing his life of Apollonius, Porphyrius and Iamblichus wrote the life of Pythagoras, surrounding and glorifying it with all those elements which could give it the appearance of a theophany, such as the Christians thought they had in Christ. They studiously represented their divine Pythagoras not only as the highest ideal of wisdom, but as an incarnate God. Even as a youth, Iamblichus says,[2] he made the impression of a god. All who saw and heard him gazed upon him full of wonder, and many expressed a well-grounded conviction that he was the son of a god. But he, confidently relying on the opinion that was held about him, on the cultivation he had received from his childhood onwards, and on the natural godlikeness of his being, showed himself all the worthier of the advantages he possessed. He was distinguished by religiousness, by knowledge, by his peculiar mode of life, by the healthy constitution of his soul, by the grace of his body in every speech and action, by an inner cheerfulness and inimitable repose of soul which he suffered to be disturbed by no fit of anger or of laughter, of envy or contentiousness, or of any other passion. So he lived in Samos like a good demon who had appeared among men.[3] When he entered Italy and founded

[1] Aug. *op. cit.* cap. 7. Honorandum enim tanquam sapientissimum virum putant, colendum autem tanquam Deum negant. The heathen oracles, on the deliverance of which the Neo-Platonists laid so great weight, are said to have declared Jesus to be one of the holiest and wisest of men. August. de Civit. Dei, 19. 23; Euseb. Dem. ev. iii. 8.

[2] De Vita Pythagorica, cap. 2.

[3] *ὡς δὴ δαίμων τις ἀγαθὸς ἐπιδημῶν τῇ Σαμῷ.*

Magna Graecia, admired of all, here also he appeared as a god. The inhabitants received his laws and precepts as divine commands, from which not even the smallest deviation was permissible. In perfect concord did the whole community of his disciples live together, praised and counted happy by all who dwelt round about them. They had introduced community of goods in their society. Pythagoras they even now counted in the circle of the gods as a good demon, friendly to mankind. Some said he was the Pythian Apollo, others the Hyperborean; some that he was Paeon, others again that he was one of the demons that inhabit the moon, and others that he was one of the Olympian gods, who, for the welfare and the restoration of the life of mortals, had appeared in human form to those then alive, that he might impart to their mortal nature the saving light of blessedness and of philosophy (the philosophy which saves).[1] No greater benefit, Iamblichus adds, had ever been sent into the world than that given by the gods through this Pythagoras, nor would any greater come; and, therefore, the proverb even now speaks with the greatest reverence of him of the wreathed head from Samos. Thus, if there is such an incarnation of God as the Christians assert with regard to Christ, or such an *ἐπιδημία εἰς ἀνθρώπους Θεοῦ*, as the philosopher Eunapius proposed to call the life of Apollonius by Philostratus,[2] and as the life of Pythagoras, as described by Porphyrius and Iamblichus, may also be called, yet Pythagoras stands alone, and Christ can only be regarded, in comparison with him, as a secondary phenomenon of the same kind. Thus it is a mere exaggeration on the part of the Christians that they should think to make more of their Christ than a god or a divine man in the sense of the heathens. But what Neo-Platonism had once recognised in Christ was no longer drawn into dispute. Even such a controversialist as Hierocles, the governor of Bithynia,

[1] *Εἰς ὠφέλειαν καὶ ἐπανόρθωσιν τοῦ θνητοῦ βίου ἐν ἀνθρωπίνῃ μορφῇ φανῆναι τοῖς τότε, ἵνα τὸ τῆς εὐδαιμονίας τε καὶ φιλοσοφίας σωτήριον ἔνανσμα χαρίσηται τῇ θνητῇ φυσει.* Comp. Tit. ii. 11 *sq.*

[2] In the *Προοίμιον* to the Vitæ Sophist., ed. Boissonade. Amsterdam, 1822, p. 3.

who, in imitation of the Ἀληθὴς λόγος of Celsus, wrote "Words of the love of truth" (λόγοι φιλαλήθεις)[1] in four books, against the Christians, raised no objections on this head. A parallel drawn between Christ and the glorified Apollonius of Philostratus appears to have formed the main feature of his work, and the only reproach he brings against the Christians is that they cannot judge more soberly and judiciously of extraordinary phenomena of this kind. The Christians pride themselves uncommonly on their Jesus, of whom they boast that he restored sight to certain blind people, and performed some other miracles of the same kind; but it is worthy of remark that the heathens hold a much more correct and reasonable view on such things, and the way in which they regard their remarkable men deserves consideration. He accordingly went on to speak of Aristeas of Proconnesus, of Pythagoras, and others of old times, dwelling most of all on the miracles of Apollonius of Tyana, who only appeared under the reign of Nero; and his purpose in speaking of all this, he said, was simply to contrast the accurate, and, in each separate case, well-founded judgment of the heathens with the thoughtlessness of the Christians. The heathens do not hold such a miracle-worker for a god, but only for a man beloved of the gods; the Christians, on the contrary, on account of a few insignificant wonders that he did, declare Jesus to be a god. And there is the further point to be considered that the works of Jesus were embellished in every way by Peter and Paul and some other lying and fantastical men like them, who also gave themselves up to sorcery, while the acts of Apollonius were described by men who stood at the highest stage of culture, and knew how to value truth, and who were led by benevolence to save the deeds of a noble man, whom the gods loved, from remaining in obscurity.[2] The most that the heathens could concede to Christ was a divine dignity in the sense in which, in general, the polytheistic view admits of different forms of the divine subsisting

[1] We know this work only from the reply of Eusebius of Cæsarea, Contra Hieroclem.

[2] Eusebius, *op. cit.* c. 2.

side by side. Thus the worship of Jesus presupposed the worship of the heathen gods as equally justified, and the controversy between heathens and Christians was thus always driven back to the question of the reality of the heathen gods. This the Christians could not grant without sacrificing the absoluteness of their notion of God; while the heathens, on the contrary, were unable to regard as the exclusive predicate of an individual, what they had been accustomed to consider as the common attribute of many. And as the Christians were still, as against the heathens, a mere sect, the origin of which was not yet very remote, they were liable to the reproach of having fallen away from the common faith of the people, which the tradition of antiquity made sacred, and to the eyes of the Neo-Platonist this was a much more serious imputation than it appeared to people in general. In the Neo-Platonist view of the world polytheism is something more than an expression of the beautiful many-sidedness of the world; it is an arrangement instituted by the ruler of the universe, and the reason of the existence of a number of different popular religions is simply that each people has its own demon as its national governor.[1] On this view, to desert the religion of one's country is an impious violation of the general world-order which God has set up, and in which he has assigned to every one his place. Thus Porphyrius said that the greatest fruit of piety was to honour the Deity according to the customs of one's country (*τιμᾷν τὸ θεῖον κατὰ τὰ πάτρια*),[2] and in a parallel between Ammonius Saccas and Origen,[3] he pronounced the judgment that Ammonius, although born of Christian parents, yet turned, as soon as he began to philosophise, to the lawful method (*ἡ κατὰ νόμους πολιτεία*), while Origen, though a Greek, and brought up among Greeks, turned to "the barbarian im-

[1] On this compare Orig. c. Celsum, v. 25.

[2] In the letter to his wife Marcella, found by A. Mai, and published in the year 1816. Cap. 18.

[3] Euseb. E. H. vi. 19. On the assertion of Porphyrius compare my notice of Heigl's Programme of the year 1835 in the Berlin Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik, 1837, 2d vol., p. 652 *sq.*; Redepennig, Origenes, 1841. 1st part, p. 422 *sq.*

pudence," corrupted his Greek learning, and lived as a Christian in a way contrary to the laws.

Thus Christianity, thrust aside at first with mere hatred and abhorrence, and declared at a later period to be nothing but deception and fanaticism, had now, by the syncretistic mediation of Neo-Platonism, arrived at a certain accommodation with the consciousness of the heathen world. So far had this process gone that the question which now came to the front in the conflict of these two spiritual powers, was merely the question of form, whether it was permissible to change from the religion which had hitherto prevailed to a new one. This was a question which a man could only answer according to the suggestions of his religious consciousness. He whose religious feelings could not dispense with such a view of the divine as the figures of the gods of the old religion offered, was compelled to answer the question in the negative; but it fell to be answered in the affirmative by every one on whose consciousness the old gods could no longer exercise the old demonic power. But even those whose inner life had become entirely loosed and delivered from all the bonds of the old faith might still feel themselves under an external obligation, by the fact that they stood as individuals, or as a very weak minority, against a greatly preponderating majority. Thus the main question at this time was substantially the same as that which afterwards attained so great importance within the Christian Church—how the subjective freedom and right of the individual is related to the power of custom and tradition, or to the authority of a tradition counted catholic. All those notions which gave the Christian Church its catholic character belonged to the old faith in the gods as well; and what right had the individual, if he could not feel himself free in his own consciousness, over against this power? It is worthy of notice how even the earliest Christian apologists, in defending the Christian faith against that of heathenism, are led to the assertion of the Protestant principle of freedom of faith and conscience as an original and essential attribute of the notion of religion. They press this on their heathen opponents: Whence, Tertullian says, is that right

derived, which every one exercises among the heathens, to worship principally this god or that? Whence but from religion itself, which, from its very nature, must be an affair of free choice, of free self-determination. Why should not the Christians have the same right?[1] The author of the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies discussed the same question. He makes the heathen grammarian Appion assert that it is the greatest sin to leave the observances of one's country and turn to barbarous customs; but in answering the question whether *παντῶς δεῖ φυλάσσειν τὰ πάτρια*, he sets up a distinction between *ἀλήθεια* and *συνήθεια*. To forbid the change from the heathen religion to the Christian, on the ground that it is wrong to fall away from the customs and the faith of one's fathers, is to ignore the great difference there is between truth and custom. Ancestral customs are to be maintained only if they are good, but the heathen religion is not good, for the simple reason that it is the worship of many gods.[2] The same reply is given by Origen to Celsus; we know that it is right to give up what has been customary from the beginning in the various countries, if there are better and more divine laws, such as those which Jesus as the mightiest has given; but it is wrong not to trust one's-self to him who has shown himself purer and mightier

[1] Apol. c. 24: Colat alius deum, alius Jovem, alius ad coelum supplices manus tendat, alius ad aram Fidei, alius, si hoc putatis, nubes numeret orans, alius lacunaria, alius suam animam deo suo voveat, alius hirci. Videte enim, ne et hoc ad irreligiositatis elogium concurrat, adimere libertatem religionis, et interdicere optionem divinitatis, ut non liceat mihi colere, quem velim, sed cogar colere, quem nolim. *Nemo* se ab invito coli volet, ne homo quidem. Atque adeo et Aegyptiis permissa est tam vanae superstitionis potestas—unicuique etiam provinciae et civitati suus deus est.—Sed nos soli arcemur a religionis proprietate. Laedimus Romanos, nec Romani habemur, quia non Romanorum deum colimus. Bene quod omnium deus est, cujus velimus aut nolimus omnes sumus. Sed apud vos quodvis colere jus est, praeter deum verum, quasi non hic magis omnium sit deus, cujus omnes sumus. Cp. Ad Scap. c. 2: Humani juris et naturalis potestatis et unicuique, quod putaverit colere, nec alii obest aut prodest alterius religio. Sed nec religionis est, cogere religionem, quae sponte suscipi debeat, non vi, cum et hostiae ab animo libenti expostulentur. Ita etsi nos compuleritis ad sacrificandum, nihil praestabitis diis vestris.

[2] Hom. iv. 7.

than all rulers.[1] Thus if there is once a conviction of the better, this conviction contains in itself the right to follow it, and no power on earth can resist it. The victory of Christianity was practically decided as soon as the Roman empire felt itself compelled, as we have to show in the following part of this work, to grant in the way of outward concession the religious principle which even the apologists had asserted.

[1] Contra Cels. v. 32.

2. THE RELATION OF CHRISTIANITY TO THE HEATHEN WORLD AND TO THE ROMAN STATE, ON ITS OUTER SIDE.

In judging of the relation of Christianity to the Roman state all that is generally considered is the series of persecutions which the Christians had to endure now under this and now under that Emperor. As the Romans were heathens they could only persecute Christianity, and if they did not do so, it was apparently merely by chance that they did not. The persecutions, however, we find, on closer examination, varied greatly in their nature and in the motives which gave rise to them: and in fact the attitude of the Roman State to Christianity varied as the general view which the heathen world took of it inclined to this side or to that. The whole series of phenomena which we have now to endeavour to set forth, are thus merely the outward reflection of that inner process with which we have become acquainted, which went on in the consciousness of the heathen world, and took the course which the nature of the case rendered necessary. So certainly as Christianity, the power of truth destined to prevail over everything, must come to take up more and more room in the consciousness of the heathen world and at last to take entire possession of it, so certain was it that a time was coming to the Roman state when it would be conquered and lay down all its power and rule in the hands of Christianity.

Born under Augustus and crucified under Tiberius, Christ stands at the head of the most important epoch of Roman history. These two phenomena, Christianity and the monarchy of the Roman emperors, appear in the world's history at the same time as equally great and momentous world-powers. But the first point at which they meet shows how little they are capable of existing together. It is not without special significance that we find it recorded in the annals of Roman history as well as in the New

Testament, that the founder of Christianity was condemned to death by the sentence of a Roman magistrate. "Auctor nominis ejus Christus Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus:" so says the first Roman historian by whom Christianity and the Christians are mentioned, as if with studious design to perpetuate the fact with diplomatic exactness in the annals of the world's history, that this had been done by a Roman and in the name of the Roman State. Christian legend, on the other hand, tells that Tiberius recognised the divinity of Christ, and proposed to the senate that he should be worshipped. But this is merely an expression of the Christian desire to represent the strong and lively impression which would be produced upon the mind even of a Tiberius by the report, which it was natural to think he would receive, of the occurrences accompanying the death of Jesus, so making it the more certain that the deserved punishment should fall on the head of the man who had incurred this great guilt. Even under the Emperor Claudius history knows nothing of any contact of the Roman State with the Christians. Suetonius tells us[1] that Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome, because they were constantly raising tumults, impulsore Chresto. It is very probable that in this impulsor Chrestus[2] a dim reminiscence is preserved of the fact that Christianity then finding an entrance into Rome, and dividing the Jewish population of Rome into two parties, as was often the case in other places, gave an impulse to those disturb-

[1] In the Vita Claudii, c. 25. Compare Acts xviii. 2. Dio Cassius, lx. 2, says exactly the opposite, that Claudius did not expel the Jews from Rome. The following is thought to be the best way to harmonise the two accounts. In the year 41 Claudius put forth an edict which prohibited all Jews from residing at Rome. The number of Jews, however, was so great, that the general banishment of them thus ordained could not have been carried into execution without disturbances. Hence only some prominent persons among them, such as Aquila, were actually compelled to leave, and instead of carrying out the original edict, a decree was issued merely that the synagogues should be closed, and following this within the same year came a general edict of toleration (Jos. Antiq. xix. 5), of which the Christians also enjoyed the protection. Compare Lehmann, Studien zur Geschichte des apostolischen Zeitalters; Greifswald, 1856, p. 1, f.: Claudius und Nero; Gotha, 1858, p. 141 *sq.*

[2] The heathens used to say Chrestus instead of Christus (Tert. Apol. cap. 3).

ances which determined the emperor to adopt that measure. Here, however, Christianity appears still quite under the umbraculum of the Jewish religion, as a religio licita,[1] a protection which of course could only extend so far for the Christians as it was granted to the Jews. In the reign of Nero for the first time are the Christians introduced into history in a manner worthy of them. When, as Tacitus tells us, the great conflagration under Nero[2] had destroyed the greatest part of the city of Rome, and popular report pointed persistently to Nero as the incendiary, he sought to meet these rumours by casting the blame upon others, and inflicting the most exquisite punishments on those whom the people called Christians,[3] and hated on account of their infamous acts. In derision they were sewed up in the skins of wild beasts, torn to pieces by dogs, or nailed to the cross, or placed in clothes that were prepared with an inflammable material, and doomed to the death of fire, to serve by way of illumination at night. They were held convicted, as Tacitus says, not so much because the charge laid against them of being the authors of the conflagration had proved to be well founded, as on account of their general hatred of the human race.[4] That is to say, they were not convicted at all; in place of the special crime which could not be imputed to them, a general charge was brought, which made them so deserving of punishment, that no special proof of facts was required against

[1] Tert. Apol. c. 21.

[2] Annal. xv. 44.

[3] Quos . . . vulgus Christianos appellabat. Thus even in Nero's time this name was the current designation for them among the people. According to Acts xi. 26, the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch (ἐγένετο—χρηματίσαι, the expression can only indicate a title which had already become popular). The form of the adjective, however, being not Greek but Latin, does not make it probable that the name arose in a town where Greek was the language of the population. The author of the Acts says it came into use at Antioch; that town being with him the great metropolis of the Gentile Christianity which was first established there, this name by which the Paulinists liked to be designated was also, in spite of its Gentile origin, to proceed from there. The reason of their preference for this name was, as the Pseudo-Ignatius distinctly tells us (cf. my work Ueber den Ursprung des Episcopats, p. 181 *sq.*), that it was the most distinct expression as against Judaism for that Christianity which was emancipated from Judaism, and did not depend on Judaism for its importance.

[4] Haud perinde in crimine incendii, quam odio generis humani convicti sunt.

them at all. If it was not proved that they had committed such a crime, at least they might well be held capable of it. Their odium generis humani was a disposition so hostile to all other men that those dealing with them were justified in disregarding all those observances by which men are generally bound in dealing with each other. They are thus marked off as a class of men who had only to thank themselves and their entire want of all humane culture and disposition, if all considerations of humanity were put out of court in dealing with them. This, then, was the view taken of the Christians by the Roman public of that age, and hence the subdere reos that we read of was tolerated: the matter was considered to be perfectly regular. Even Tacitus takes this view of the transactions; he says not a word to indicate disapproval of these atrocities: on the contrary, the expressions he uses in reference to Christianity show clearly enough that he considered the procedure against them to be sufficiently justified. What was done against the Christians at that time was thus merely the practical consequence of the view which the heathen world in general took of Christianity. It is true that the occasion of the Neronian persecution was a matter of chance, that the purpose which it had in view did not appear to be one that had to do directly with Christianity itself,[1] and that people saw in Christianity something quite different from what it really was. In spite of this the persecution was a murderous blow directed against Christianity itself. It was not an attempt to suppress it altogether, but it was a practical declaration that Christianity was to be suppressed, as everything

[1] According to Lehmann, Studien, etc., p. 9, the persecution is to be traced to the hatred of the Jews, and the originator of it was Nero's wife, Poppaea Sabina. According to Josephus, Antiq. xx. 8, this lady was a Jewish proselyte, and according to Tacitus, Hist. i. 22, she kept mathematicians, among whom Jewish magicians were reckoned, in great numbers about her person, and had the greatest influence with Nero. Thus her hand is to be traced at work in the persecution. This is a pure combination. E. Böhmer in the Jahrb. für deutsche Theologie, iv. 3, p. 446, adopts the theory, and uses it even to account for the conflagration. The plan it was to serve was to destroy the old palace as a preliminary to the erection of the regnum Hierosolymorum promised to Nero by mathematicians! Suet. cap. 40.

bad and reprehensible ought not to be tolerated. It was thus the first beginning of that whole course of ill-treatment which Christianity had to suffer from the Roman State, and which might be expected to be renewed again and again as long as the view taken of Christianity by the State remained unchanged. The antithesis which existed essentially between the two great powers had now assumed the shape of a great historical fact; it could now be clearly seen how wide the antithesis was. On the side of the Christians, too, this conflict with the Roman State had the unavoidable effect of making them aware of the full extent of that repulsion which existed between the State and them. How could it be otherwise than that this, the first real persecution of the Christians, happening with all its scenes of martyrdom at a time when they were looking with the greatest suspense for the Parousia of Christ, and the tribulations by which it was to be accompanied, should fall with the most agitating effect not only on the Roman Church, but on the Christians in every place where the news was heard? Even though the persecution did not extend beyond the city of Rome, yet it could be regarded in no other light than as the first signal of the great catastrophe which was now to burst forth upon the world. In the Apocalypse, which was written only a few years afterwards, we have the most speaking and authentic witness to the deep and abiding impression which that persecution made on the whole Christian world. That work is in fact nothing else than the Christian counter-manifesto to the Roman declaration of war which was virtually made in the persecution. In those pictures of the Apocalypse in which the Roman Babylon is described, the woman drunk with the blood of the holy martyrs, how distinctly do we see the reflection of the bloody scenes of the Neronian persecution. Nero himself, the tyrant, who had been the first to commit so wicked an outrage against the Christians and Christianity itself, was now counted on all hands to be Antichrist. The writer of the Apocalypse declares that he is, and it is very probable that the well-known popular myth, which Tacitus and Suetonius assure us was so generally believed by the Romans

themselves, that Nero was still alive, that he was coming again, that he was to return as ruler from the East, that this myth proceeded from the Christians, and arose just from the necessity they were in to place him as Antichrist over against Christ.[1] Thus the Christians had no other view of the heathen world and the Roman State than the heathens had of Christianity. They also saw in that which stood against them nothing but a world deserving destruction, and with rapid steps advancing to it. Thus they would rather break altogether with the presently subsisting order of the world, and see it cut off all at once, and in the most violent way, by the intervention of the Lord appearing again from heaven in his glory, than give themselves to the thought that in it, on the ground of the Roman empire still continuing to exist and to develop itself in time, should be the scene where the idea of the

[1] Compare my Abhandlung über die Apokalypse, Theol. Jahrb. 1852, S. 325 *sq.*, Jahrb. für deutsche Theologie, 1859, 4. 3: E. Böhmer, zur Lehre vom Antichrist, nach Schneckenburger, p. 441 *sq.* A not unimportant contribution to the history of that age which was agitated by the belief in Nero's return as Antichrist, appears to me to be contained in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. In my essay on the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, in the Theol. Jahrb. 1855, p. 141 *sq.*, I have sought to show this. The author of the epistle, speaking in the name of the apostle Paul, gives an earnest exhortation μὴ ταχέως σαλευθῆναι, etc., ii. 1, not to be deceived by any one, nor be seduced into the belief that the day of the Parousia was now at hand. It appears very natural to refer this to the well-known Pseudo-Neronian disturbances, especially those mentioned by Tacitus, Hist. ii. 8. Sub idem tempus, Tacitus says of the time after the murder of Galba, when not only Otho and Vitellius, but also Vespasian, were about to resort to arms, all with the same intention, Achaia atque Asia falso exterritae, velut Nero adventaret, vario super exitu ejus rumore, eoque pluribus vivere eum fingentibus credentibusque.—Inde late terror, multis ad celebritatem nominis erectis. In those provinces which were the chief scene of this movement, Achaia, or Greece and Macedonia, including the town of Thessalonica, the Christians already constituted a considerable part of the population. Ewald correctly remarks, in his Sendschreiben des Apostels Paulus, 1857, p. 25, that it does not follow from the passage of Tacitus that a Pseudo-Nero had arisen by that time. It is all the more remarkable, however, that the mere rumour of the return of Nero, and the belief in it, this ludibrium falsi Neronis, was able to terrify so many people. That it was so may lead us to think that those who were terrified were principally Christians fearing the appearance of Antichrist. On the close relation in which the Antichrist, who is described in 2 Thess. ii., stands to the Apocalypse, see the essay above named. (See also the author's Paul, T.T.F.L., vol. ii. p. 314 *sq.*—Tr.)

kingdom of God should realise itself. From this harsh view of their relation to the Roman empire, the Christians could not even then disengage themselves, when the expectation of the Parousia subsequently ceased to occupy, as it did at first, the foreground of their consciousness. At the least they saw in the Roman empire the kingdom of the demons with all the pompa diaboli, and their Christian consciousness could only turn away with abhorrence from communion with such a kingdom of darkness. How many steps of approximation had to come between, before these harsh antitheses could come together to a unity of consciousness, and the Roman empire, and Christianity as the dominant religion of that empire, as the religion of the State, become identical notions? It is evident on the face of it that this could not come to pass till after a long struggle passing through various phases.

Notwithstanding this, history tells us nothing for a considerable time of the further fortunes of Christianity and the Christians in the Roman empire. The first who is mentioned as a persecutor of the Christians after Nero is Domitian, a portio Neronis de crudelitate, as Tertullian calls him;[1] but we have no distinct information about his time. The martyrdom of the apostle John in boiling oil, which is placed in his reign, is in any case a pure fiction. The name of a Clement appears in a remarkable way even in the pagan historians, under the reign of Domitian; but who can know what was the relation between the Flavius Clemens, executed by Domitian's orders, and the Christian Clement who was bishop of the Roman Church, and occupies so considerable a place in the traditions of that age? Even where there is very probably a reference to Christianity, what is named is atheism and Jewish customs, so that the supposition appears warranted that at this time Christianity was again under the umbraculum of the Jewish religion, and did not attract to itself, at least very specially, the attention of the Roman State. In the provinces the hatred of the population was easily excited against the Christians, and an act of persecution may have taken place here and there;

[1] Apol. cap. 5.

but these are mere isolated cases, and have no great importance for a more general view. The first positive help we get to fix the relation as to which we are inquiring, is the edict of the Emperor Trajan, occasioned by the famous letter of the younger Pliny. In the districts of Asia Minor of which Pliny was governor, in Bithynia, the number of the Christians appears to have increased very greatly in a short time. The heathen religion was deserted on a large scale, as Pliny's letter itself shows us, its temples stood forsaken, its festivals were no longer celebrated in the usual way, the animals for sacrifice found no purchasers. The consequence of this was a reaction from the heathen side. Christians of every age and rank, and of both sexes, were dragged before the tribunals, and the question now arose, and had to be decided, what right they had to be Christians. Pliny himself tells us very plainly that the Roman laws contained nothing to settle this point. He makes no secret of the embarrassment in which he was placed when Christians were brought before his tribunal. He had never had to do with any examinations of Christians, and did not know what was to be punished and what questions ought to be asked, whether a distinction should be made in respect of age, between children and grown-up people, whether there might be a retractation, or whether, if a man had once been a Christian, it should avail him nothing that he had ceased to be one, and whether the name in itself was punishable, even if there were no flagitia connected with it, or the flagitia cohaerentia nomini. The decision to which Pliny felt himself obliged to come on this question was that those who confessed to being Christians, and persisted, when warned, in their confession, ought to be punished. He said he was of opinion that whatever the nature of that which they confess might be, they, at all events, deserved to be punished for their contumacy and inflexible obstinacy. The general judgment to which he was brought, after all these exactly and strictly conducted investigations on the subject of Christianity, was that it was a prava et immodica superstitio, but that, far as the contagion had extended, not only in the towns, but also in the villages and

in the country, it might yet be checked if the mass of its adherents received an opportunity of recantation. Pliny laid the matter before the emperor, because it was new to himself, and he wished for more detailed information and instructions on it, and the answer of the emperor shows us still more distinctly what position the Christians then occupied in the Roman empire. Trajan approved of Pliny's opinions and conduct, and confessed that the matter was such that no general rule could be laid down about it at all. The Christians should not be hunted out, but if accused and convicted, they should be punished. But if one of them should say that he is not a Christian, and give a practical proof of the fact, *i.e.*, if he shows his reverence for the heathen gods, then he is to be forgiven on account of his recantation, whatever suspicions there may be against him on account of his past life. No attention is to be paid to anonymous informations, because it would be a bad example, and contrary to the spirit of the age of Trajan to do so. Looking at this latter point, Trajan's decision appears to be as fair and as merciful as could be expected from a pagan emperor. The motive underlying it may have been simply a conviction that an open exercise of power in the matter would only aggravate the evil, and that a fanaticism such as Christianity was in his eyes was certain to cool down of itself, if too much attention were not paid to it. But for all this we see that the consciousness of the age has changed its attitude with regard to Christianity. It is not now as in the expression with which Tacitus indicates the view of the age of Nero, an exitiabilis, but only a prava et immodica superstitio. It no longer counted for a thing entirely incompatible with the moral and social institutions of mankind, but only for an exaggeration, a thing exceeding the right measure. It was no longer thought that Christians as such were per flagitia invisi; it was asked, in the first place, if there were flagitia nomini cohaerentia. Punishment was only to be carried so far as it was necessary, and it was necessary, because, when Christianity openly appeared it presented an open contradiction of the Roman State religion which it was impossible to

tolerate. Thus Christianity was to be allowed to exist in the Roman State so far at least as it could be ignored. But how long could it be ignored, when it was always stretching out its hands to new conquests? And what had it to expect from the State, when even Pliny saw in it not now a mere piece of fanaticism, but a stiff-necked obstinacy, bidding defiance to the authority of the State, and challenging it to put forth its power, and when the emperor himself, in writing about them, used the plain words: si deferantur et arguantur, puniendi sunt?

What, in fact, makes the edict of Trajan to mark an epoch in history, is that it for the first time formally and absolutely denies to Christianity a legitimate existence in the Roman State. Without any further investigation of his guilt being held necessary, the Christian name as such made every one who was once denounced as a Christian and refused to do the act denying his Christianity, a criminal worthy of death. Thus Trajan's decision, though it does not betray any intention directly hostile to Christianity, contained the harshest regulations with respect to it that could have been made, and the Christian apologists, looking at it from their point of view, could see in it nothing but a great injustice, at variance with all established notions of right, and containing a contradiction in itself.[1] The Christians were still regarded in the same light as before; the only difference was that the absolute sentence of condemnation now pronounced against them proceeded

[1] O sententiam necessitate confusam! exclaims Tertullian (Apol. c. 2) with regard to Trajan's rescript to Pliny, negat inquirendos ut innocentes et mandat puniendos ut nocentes. Parcit et saevit, dissimulat et animadvertit. Quid temet ipsum censura circumvenis? si damnas, cur non et inquiris, si non inquiris, cur non et absolvis?—Christianum hominem omnium scelerum reum, deorum, imperatorum, legum, morum, naturae totius inimicum existimas et cogis negare, ut absolvas, quem non poteris absolvere, nisi negaverit. Praevaricaris in leges. But it was only the Christians who thought the edict so unreasonable. They had no notion as yet that the heathens were only doing to them what would soon enough be the common practice of the Christian Church itself. Pliny says in the passage referred to that he thought himself obliged, in any case, to punish the pertinacia et inflexibilis obstinatio of the Christians. This refers to the refusal to deny the Christian faith and profess adherence to the faith in the heathen gods. The reason why the Christians became martyrs to their convictions was accordingly that the Roman State upheld the State religion, and could

not from the general human point of view, but from that of the Roman State.[1]

The rescript of Trajan continued under the following emperors to be the legal rule for the treatment of the Christians. Solely on account of the name they bore they were regarded as criminals to be punished, as malefactors with regard to whom one was entitled to believe the worst without further proof. As the number of the Christians increased the hatred of the heathen population towards them rose also, and it happened more and more frequently that Christians were accused and executed for no reason but the Christian name.[2] There was no possible relief against so unrighteous a procedure, until the time should come when the whole view taken of Christianity in the Roman empire had undergone an essential

not leave unpunished those who expressly denied that religion, the ἀθέους. This is accordingly the chief point in Tertullian's Apologeticus also; it seemed to be perfectly self-evident that they were not punished qua Christians; the law of the State is confronted by the profound inner self-certainty of the Christian consciousness. Nunc de manifestioribus dicam, says Tertullian (Apol. c. 10), Deos, inquitis, non colitis.—Itaque sacrilegii et majestatis rei convenimur. Summa haec causa, immo tota est.—Deos vestros colere desinimus, ex quo illos non esse cognoscimus. The question accordingly is, whether they are gods: tunc et Christiani puniendi.—Sed nobis, inquitis, dii sunt. Appellamus—ad conscientiam vestram—si poterit negare, omnes istos deos vestros homines fuisse. Compare c. 24: Laedimus Romanos, nec Romani habemur, quia non Romanorum Deum colimus.—C. 27: Igitur provocati ad sacrificandum, obstruimus gradum pro fide conscientiae nostrae—and prefer obstinatio to salus. The characteristic of Trajan's edict is thus, that it regulates this relation from the point of view of the Roman State and the Roman State religion.

[1] The sentencing of the Christians ad bestias and their removal to Rome for that purpose, which is said to have been the fate of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, may have been nothing very uncommon even under Trajan, but having regard to the epistles, even in the Syrian text, and even after the defence of it by Lipsius in Niedner's Zeitschr. für histor. Theol. 1856, p. 76 *sq.*, the story of his martyrdom is very improbable. The fact is, probably, that in the year 115, when Trajan was spending the winter at Antioch, in consequence of the earthquake which happened this year, Ignatius fell a martyr to the rage of the people at Antioch itself. Comp. Clinton's Fasti Romani, vol. i., Oxford, 1845, p. 100 *sq.* The nearness of Trajan at the time was what caused the story to be gradually developed into the splendid tale of martyrdom which it became.

[2] Compare the greater Apology of Justin, cap. 2-4, and specially the second smaller Apology, where a very suggestive case of this sort is narrated. Also Eusebius, E. H. v. 21. Tert. Apol. cap. 2: Illud solum expectatur, quod odio publico

change. Thus it is very natural that the Christians, having among them even at this time men of sufficient culture and intellectual force to plead the cause of Christianity in powerful discourse, should have directed their energies principally to this quarter, and sought to modify public opinion in this direction. Thus the period immediately after Trajan's edict saw the appearance of the Christian Apologies, which were defensive writings addressed to the emperors, the governors of the provinces, and to the great public in general, and constituted a very considerable phenomenon of the time, setting forth in a characteristic way the position of Christianity in the empire. Whatever effect they may have had in the way of gradually enlightening the Roman world as to the general character of Christianity, they produced no result in the supreme potentates whom they were intended to influence. They cannot, in any case, be considered to have called forth those rescripts in which the next emperors after Trajan are said to have taken the Christians under their protection against the oppressions to which the edict of Trajan gave rise. Those documents bear the stamp of fabrication far too plainly on their face. How can we believe that a Roman emperor of that time could issue a rescript like that attributed to Antoninus Pius?[1] "I was of opinion," the emperor is made to write to the *Κοινὸν τῆς Ἀσίας*, the assembly of the delegates of the towns of Asia Minor, "that the gods would take care

necessarium est, confessio nominis, non examinatio criminis. Ad Scapulam, cap. 4: Quod aliud negotium patitur Christianus, nisi suae sectae? According to Volkmar, Theol. Jahrb., 1855, p. 227 *sq.*, 412 *sq.*, "die Zeit Justins des Märtyrers kritisch untersucht," both the Apologies of Justin belong to the reign of Antoninus Pius, about the year 150. The same procedure against the Christians is to be noticed in 1 Peter iv. 14 *sq.* Here there is an exhortation not to be actually, what the name *Χριστιανὸς* is supposed to imply that one is, a *κακοποιὸς*. The reference is so clear and distinct that it at once fixes the period of the edict of Trajan as the time when the epistle came into existence. Schwegler was the first to show this,—Nachapostolisches Zeitalter, ii. p. 11, *sq.*

[1] Justin, Apol. i. 70; Eusebius, E. H. iv. 13. In Eusebius it is an edict of Marcus Aurelius, although Eusebius says immediately before, cap. 12, that it was the emperor to whom Justin addressed his Apology, *i.e.* Antoninus Pius. Moreover, what Eusebius says at the end of cap. 13 of the confirmatory testimony of the bishop Melito of Sardis cannot refer to this edict as an edict of Marcus Aurelius;

that such people (the Christians) should not remain hidden, for they would punish much more, if they could, those who will not worship them. You torment them and accuse them as if they were atheists in their way of thinking, and you reproach them with other things which we cannot prove. It can only be advantageous to them if they are seen to die for that which is laid to their charge; when they prefer giving up their bodies to doing what you require of them, they conquer us. It is unkind to remind you of the earthquakes which have happened and still happen. Compared with the Christians you lose your courage in such circumstances; they have far more confidence in God than you. At such a time you appear to know nothing of the gods, you neglect the sacrifices, you do not know how to worship God, and therefore you are envious of those who worship him, and persecute them to death. Concerning these people some other governors of provinces wrote to my divine father, and he replied to them that they should leave these people in peace if they do not attempt anything against the dominion of the Romans. And many have sent reports about them to me, and I also answered in accordance with my father's opinion. If any one has a complaint to bring against any of these people as such (as a Christian) the accused person is to be discharged even if it is shown that he is what is said, but the accuser is to be punished." Every word of this betrays the Christian writer, who makes the emperor give the heathens a lecture, while, with regard to the Christians, he speaks in exact accordance with the wishes of the Christians as to the way in which they would desire to be judged and dealt with by the Roman authorities. The emperor ends, in fact, with issuing commands exactly contrary to those of the edict of Trajan. There can be no doubt that the missives said to have been directed by the same emperor to Larissa, Thessalonica, Athens, and all the Greeks, in favour of

for had Melito known of such a document he could not have omitted to mention it in his Apology; comp. Eusebius, iv. 26. This accordingly can only refer to the missives to Larissa, etc. The alleged edict arose, no doubt, under Marcus Aurelius, but was imputed to Antoninus Pius, in order to increase its influence by giving it the authority of the earlier emperor.

the Christians, belong to the same category.[1] Even the rescript of Hadrian,[2] which remained unquestioned until quite recently, cannot, when we look at it in its connection with the others, be freed from the same suspicion. The Emperor is said to have written to Minucius Fundanus, governor of Asia Minor, that he did not wish to leave undecided the matter brought up by his predecessor, Serenius Granianus, with respect to the Christians, lest the peace of the province should be disturbed, and opportunity given to sycophants for their wickedness. In future, therefore, the emperor ordains, the only permissible form for making an accusation against the Christians is to be this, that the accuser is to present himself to the court for speech and answer, and to undertake to convict the Christians of an offence against the laws. The judge is then to examine into the case with all carefulness. In case of conviction the punishment due to the crime is to be inflicted; but a calumnious accusation against a Christian, the emperor asseverates, is to be punished without mercy as the shamefulness of the case requires. It has been well shown,[3] that this rescript is not directed, as is generally supposed, against disorderly and tumultuous proceedings on the part of the populace against the Christians. The practice which it presupposes as existing at the time—for it does not prescribe a new practice—is simply the judicial form of accusation, in which, however, the mere denunciation of any one as a Christian was sufficient for a conviction. If Hadrian had done something different from this—if he had ordained that the accusations brought against the Christians should be carefully looked into, the strictest procedure of law observed with regard to them, and only that punishment pronounced on them which was proportionate to the crime actually

[1] περὶ τοῦ μηδὲν νεωτερίζειν περὶ ἡμῶν, as Melito expresses himself in his Apology to Marcus Aurelius, in Eusebius, E. H. iv. 26, but without giving any further information about the contents, or mentioning specially the Rescript to the Κοινὸν τῆς Ἀσίας.

[2] Justin, Apol. i. 69. Euseb. E. H. iv. 9.

[3] In the Theol. Jahrb. 1856, p. 387 *sq.*; Keim's Essay; Bedenken gegen die Aechtheit des hadrianischen Christen-Rescripts.

proved against them, this would have amounted to such a reversal of the edict of Trajan as we cannot well assume to have taken place. By the new rescript, which simply ignored the old one, and deprived it of all validity, the Christians would have obtained at once all that they could wish, that they should not be judicially condemned for the nomen ipsum, but only for the flagitia cohaerentia nomini. This is exactly the difference which the edict of Hadrian makes, but which that of Trajan seeks to prevent from being made. The Christians could not understand a procedure which condemned them for nothing but their name; and as they felt strongly that what was connected with the Christian name was not only unproved, but incapable of proof, they held themselves entitled to apply to their accusers the term of sycophant.[1] In the eyes of the Christians they were this, but so long as Trajan's words, si deferantur et arguantur, puniendi sunt, were still in force, and the general conviction of the time with regard to Christianity was that it was of essentially criminal character, sycophantic accusations of this kind could not take place. Thus this rescript also is a Christian fiction; its contents do not fit in to the historical connection of the preceding and the subsequent age.[2]

Under Antoninus Pius the Christians suffered harsher oppres-

[1] This expression which is used in the rescript is found also in the Apology of Melito, in Eusebius, iv. 26, and in Athenag. Leg. 1, 2.

[2] Neander, Church History (Bohn), i. 140, defends the genuineness of the rescript, but proves nothing in its favour. Even Melito (Euseb. iv. 26) knew the rescript: whether Justin Martyr was acquainted with it is doubtful, as the rescripts standing at the end of the greater Apology are merely tacked on to it. When oppressions and persecutions increased upon the Christians, protests were made against them in the form of alleged rescripts put in the mouth of former emperors. The words of Trajan (Conquirendi non sunt) might be interpreted to mean that the Christians were not to be punished so long as they committed no acts of a criminal nature. Thus the rescript of Hadrian would be merely a commentary on that of Trajan. And yet it can scarcely be thought possible that any one should venture to put forth such a document as that of Antonine to the Κοινὸν τῆς Ἀσίας. In any case the two documents equally prove of what literary fictions that age was capable, if only the interests of Christianity seemed to require them, and how easily they were taken up by the Christians. So early a writer as Melito appeals at least in a general way to those rescripts, and his belief in them is such that he cannot go far enough in his captatio benevolentiae towards Hadrian and the Antonines.

sion than under Hadrian;[1] and under Marcus Aurelius this was still more the case. In his Apology, addressed to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, and written about the year 170, Melito describes the position of the Christians.[2] "What," he says, "has never before happened, the race of the pious is now persecuted in Asia by new edicts. The shameless informers, greedy of the property of others, plunder, as they find in the edicts the occasion to do so, the innocent by day and night. Melito doubts whether a righteous emperor could ever ordain anything so unjust, but says that if this decree and this new edict, which should not have been passed as it is even against hostile barbarians, does proceed from the emperor himself, they entreat him the more earnestly not to give them up to be thus publicly plundered. This is just the period of the first great Christian persecutions which were conducted by the Roman State authorities. The first fell upon the Church at Smyrna in the year 167, the second ten years afterwards upon the Gallic Churches at Lugdunum and Vienna. It might be thought strange that such severe persecutions should be directed against the Christians under an emperor so celebrated for his love of justice and his kindness of disposition. But putting aside what did not proceed immediately from the emperor himself, but is to be ascribed only to the authorities, and still more to the passion of a rude populace, we find that in this persecution also nothing more was done than to carry out the edict of Trajan. And the Emperor Marcus Aurelius was quite the man to regard such a procedure as being perfectly in harmony both with the interests of the Roman State and with his Stoical principles. The conduct of the Christians in the persecutions, their heroism in martyrdom, which filled many with wonder and with respect for Christianity, must have as powerfully prejudiced others against it, who, even as Romans, disliked nothing so much as a religious fanaticism by which men's minds were excited. Christianity was still held to be a prava et immodica superstitio, but one which in its con-

[1] On Hadrian, compare Keim, *op. cit.* p. 394.

[2] Eusebius, E. H. iv. 26.

flict with the Roman State became a pertinacia which deserved to be punished, and an inflexibilis obstinatio which must be broken by the power of the State.[1] As soon as the Christians, when brought before the tribunals, renounced their Christian faith, they were, as Marcus Aurelius also directed, set at liberty without further punishment.[2] This was the procedure observed with regard to the Christians during the whole period of the Antonines.[3]

It was not till the reign of the Emperor Septimius Severus, who became the monarch of the Roman empire in the year 193, and marks, in more respects than this, a turning-point in the history of the Roman emperors, that a change of view came about, as to the relation of Christianity to the Roman empire. By a succession of rulers of foreign extraction the imperial power lost, about this time, its national Roman character. The Emperor Septimius Severus himself was a thoroughbred African, and his wife Julia, a Syrian, and the emperors following Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Heliogabalus, Alexander Severus, belonged to their race, and were in their whole outward appearance more Orientals than Romans. Under their influence that religious syncretism came to be the prevalent way of thinking on religious matters with which, on the side it turned towards Christianity, we are acquainted from the work of Philostratus, or the life of Apollonius of Tyana, a work belonging to this period. Emperors whose leanings were in this direction could not feel the same interest in the Roman State-religion which the Antonines had so strongly asserted. It is true

[1] There can be no doubt that that ordinance of Marcus Aurelius was aimed specially at Christianity, that whosoever should introduce new and unknown religions, and especially those by which the leves hominum animi were excited and disturbed, should, according to his rank, be either banished or punished with death. See the passages in Gieseler, K.-g. I. i. p. 174.

[2] Euseb. E. H. v. 1.

[3] An instance under Commodus in Euseb. E. H. v. 21. From Dio Cassius, lxxii. 4, we learn that Marcia, the concubine of Commodus, was kindly disposed towards the Christians, and the Philosophoumena, ix. 12, p. 287, confirm the account, speaking of the φιλόθεος παλλακὴ Κομμόδου, and saying that she directed inquiries to the Roman bishop Victor as to the Christian martyrs who were in the mines of Sardinia, and procured from Commodus an order for their release. In this way Callistus, who was also in this position, obtained his liberty.

that Septimius Severus must be counted among the persecutors of Christianity, and the persecutions under his reign are said to have been so violent in many places, that, as Eusebius says,[1] it was thought that Antichrist was close at hand. But it may be that his strict prohibition of a change of religion not only to Christianity but to Judaism as well was due to his syncretistic tendencies: his object may have been simply to check the encroachments by which these religions were injuring the heathen religion, and by restricting each religion to its own ground to hasten the time when it would be possible for the different religions to continue side by side.[2] At any rate we seem to be entitled to suppose that the Empress Julia was by no means a stranger to the religious syncretism which was so much at home in her family. She was herself of Syrian descent; and the grandchildren of her sister Maesa, Heliogabalus and Alexander Severus, the emperors who were the chief representatives of this syncretism, made the Syrian sun-worship of the East the foundation and ground-form of all other kinds of religion. The former of these two was himself a priest of the Temple of the Sun in the town of Emesa. Thus, in the great pantheon which Heliogabalus erected at Rome to his god, the god from whom he himself, his priest, took his name, the Jewish, the Samaritan, and the Christian religions were to be united with the Roman sacra. To the same worship did the pious Emperor Alexander Severus dedicate his lararium, where, in addition to the better Roman emperors and noble spirits, such as Apollonius of Tyana, Abraham and Orpheus, he also worshipped Christ. Thus at this period Christianity was no longer a wicked, immense superstition. If not the one and only true religion, yet it was as much a religion as any other; it also was one of the various forms in which the idea of religion is reflected, as the sun in the various clear surfaces on which its rays impinge. And if that be so, then it has the same right with other religions to exist and to have its

[1] E. H. vi. 7.

[2] Comp. Niebuhr, Vorträge über römische Geschichte, iii. 250:—"Characteristic of him was his leaning to strange religions."

own worship in the Roman empire. The Emperor Alexander Severus is said himself to have cherished the intention to build a temple to Christ, and to adopt him into the number of the Roman gods. There were accordingly no persecutions of the Christians during this period, except for a short time under Maximinus the Thracian; nor are there wanting stray indications of a disposition to regard the Christians with favour; in fact, one of the emperors of this period, Philip the Arabian, is said to have been a Christian himself.

It could not fail to be the case that in this long period of toleration and rest the Christians increased greatly in number. But at this time, when Trajanus Decius overthrew Philip the Arabian and obtained possession of the empire, there began a period of a very different character. The question at this time was no longer what view in general was to be taken of Christianity, how it was related to the general consciousness of the age, and to the circle of other ideas then in vogue, or what place was to be conceded to it alongside of the other religions subsisting in the Roman empire. We can see plainly that under the rule of the emperors of the last period, in whom Roman sentiment was not so strong, it had become a power so firmly established on the basis of fact, that emperors, in whom the old State-consciousness of Rome awakened in its full energy, could see in it nothing but an enemy, with whom a battle of life and death must come sooner or later. In the Christian persecutions, beginning about this time, we find, accordingly, the characteristic feature, that they did not proceed, as in so many cases previously, from the people, whose hatred and fanaticism drove the Roman authorities to persecute not unfrequently against their will, but from the head of the State himself. Thus they had quite a different character from the former persecutions, in which, as Origen says, "only a few persons, who could easily be counted, died at certain times for the Christian religion."[1] Now the persecutions are general measures, and extend over the whole empire; they are set on foot according to a certain principle, they are

[1] Adv. Cels. iii. 8.

methodically organised, and aim at no other end than the total suppression of Christianity. The emperor Decius was the first to conceive this plan, and though it suffered very great interruptions in the execution, it was never abandoned till the end of the period of the heathen emperors. In the year 250, as soon as he entered upon the government, Decius issued an order to all governors of the provinces, in which he threatened them personally with punishment, if they did not proceed against the Christians with all severity, and bring them back by fear and by all sorts of tortures to the Roman religion.[1] The execution of the imperial command was begun in this way. The Christians living in a place received notice that before a certain date they must renounce their religion and sacrifice to the heathen gods. If this was not done, the further steps were taken of examining them judicially and using force. At this period also there was no lack of instances of the Christian martyr-heroism, but the long peace which had gone before had impaired the zeal and courage of the Christians, and very many became unfaithful to the Christian profession, some of them openly, and some secretly. It was not undesigned, but was part of the plan of such a persecution, that it fell with the greatest force upon the bishops, as the heads of the churches. The punishment of death, which there was some reluctance to resort to at once in the case of the multitude of Christians, was inflicted chiefly upon them. Nor did the persecution come to an end after the death of the emperor Decius in the year 251. Public calamities, for which the Christians were always held responsible, excited the populace to an even greater degree against those who refused to take part in the sacrifices offered to appease the gods. After a short period of rest under Valerian the persecution burst forth afresh in the year 257, being again carefully planned, and beginning with the heads of the churches. There soon followed an edict still more severe, against the bishops, priests, and deacons, against the senators, the men of rank, the Roman equites, the matrons, the courtiers at the imperial court, who professed

[1] Eusebius, E. H. vi. 41.

Christianity. The notion was, not to punish Christians in general; it was calculated that if once Christianity were driven out of the higher ranks, it would not be able to maintain itself among the masses of the people. Notwithstanding this, a longer period of rest now ensued. Gallienus, the son and co-regent of the emperor Valerian, who had been taken prisoner by the Persians, when he came to the undivided power, not only put a stop to the persecution which was still going on, but issued edicts which may be regarded as the first laws of toleration in favour of the Christians and of Christianity. He wrote to several bishops that it was his will that they should live in peace and security, and commanded the heathens to yield up to the Christians again their places of meeting and their burying-grounds.[1] We should be inferring too much, however, from these concessions, if we regarded them as giving to Christianity anything more than temporary toleration, or granting to it a right of existence which the State recognised. Yet under the reign of the following emperors also nothing was done against Christianity. Even Diocletian, whose illustrious name was made of such hateful memory for the Christians by the last great act of persecution, did not at first show a hostile disposition to Christianity. The Christian Church had never been in so flourishing a condition as it was then. It can hardly be told, so speaks Eusebius in passing to his discussion of this last period,[2] how much the Christian Church had increased during this time, both in extent and influence. Even the government of provinces had been intrusted to Christians by the emperor, and the Christians in the imperial palaces, who occupied not unimportant offices at court, were at liberty to exercise their religion. How could this state of things all at once undergo so great a change?

The emperor Diocletian is recognised on all hands as having been one of the most competent rulers of the Roman empire. Niebuhr says of him,[3] that as a man of rare understanding he saw

[1] Eusebius, E. H. vii. 13. [2] *Ibid.* E. H. viii. 1.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 293. See also Vogel: Der Kaiser Diocletian, Gotha 1857, who describes him as a great emperor, and as the inaugurator of a new era for the empire.

that it was extremely dangerous to unite by force elements which tended naturally to separation, and, accordingly, to remove the many elements of division between East and West, thought out the seemingly curious system of giving to each a different government under a prince of its own; while the two princes were to be bound together by a common centre so as to form a whole. If this be so, there can be no doubt that in other things also he saw how little the heterogeneous elements which co-existed in the Roman empire admitted of being held permanently together at any common point of unity. His sentiments in matters of religion may be gathered from the preamble to the law, which he promulgated in the year 296 against the sect of the Manichaeans, which even then was pressing into the Roman empire.[1] "The immortal gods have well ordained and settled in their providence what is true and good. Many good and wise men are agreed to hold this fast unchanged. It is not right to oppose these; an old religion must not be condemned by a new one. For it is the greatest crime to undo what has once had its usage and course from of old, and has taken firm possession and subsistence." These sentences express the genuine Roman view of the relation of the State to religion. We shall have an entirely erroneous idea on the subject, if we suppose that the question as to the recognition of Christianity in the Roman State must have been decided according to our notions of the general rights of man, of toleration, and of freedom of conscience. Such notions and principles lay as yet quite beyond the sphere of vision of the ancient world. A man was to believe, not what he recognised as truth in the light of his own free convictions, but only what was stamped by the authority of tradition as the truth publicly recognised. The only question to be asked in matters of religion was, what was old and what was new. It was in accordance with this view that Diocletian passed his law against the Manichaeans. Now what was the application of this view to Christianity? Christianity also stood as a new religion over against the Roman State-religion, and it had hitherto been treated

[1] See Gieseler, K.-g., i. 1, p. 311.

accordingly. But now, when it had maintained itself nearly 300 years, and had even grown to be an important power in the State, the question might very justly be asked, whether it was still to be regarded as a nova religio. In any case, there was no ignoring the fact that it could not now be thrust out from the possession it had gained in all these years without the greatest exertions and a very dangerous convulsion of the State. We see these reflections actually at work when we are told of Diocletian,[1] that he, an old man, had long withstood the most urgent solicitations to set on foot a persecution of the Christians, representing how dangerous it was to disturb the peace of the world and shed the blood of so many people. The Christians have a way of embracing death with pleasure, and it is enough to keep the courtiers and the soldiers away from this religion. On the other hand, however, Christianity could not be left in the enjoyment of the power which it possessed, nor suffered quietly to extend itself further, without giving up the principle of the Roman State. At a time when the Empire required to summon up all its powers to resist the pressure of so many enemies, everything depended on the force of arms and the success of military undertakings. And to what quarter, according to heathen notions, was one to look for this success but to the heathen gods, and how could these gods grant success, if at the sacrifices at which they were to manifest their favour, they were offended and repelled by the presence of so many Christians in the army, and of the hated symbol of the cross? Thus, whatever view might be taken of Christianity, its relation to the Roman State had to the latter become a question of life and death. The Emperor Cæsar Galerius, being of a warlike character, and attached to the Roman sacra, held this point of view very strongly with regard to the position of the empire at the time. The chief impulse to the last decisive struggle is said to have come from him and Hierocles, the Governor of Bithynia. It is significant that the persecution began, as Eusebius expressly tells us, in the army. There were many Christians in high posi-

[1] Lactantius, de mort. persec. cap. 11.

tions in the army. No objection had hitherto been raised to their presence there on account of their religion, but now it was thought more and more questionable that profane persons should be present at the sacra. Soldiers who would not take part in the sacrifices were removed from the army, and all of them sentenced to death. This was the beginning of the persecution. Diocletian ceased to set himself against the impetuosity of Galerius, and the storm burst upon the Church in all its fury.[1] Three edicts against Christianity

[1] The striking phenomenon of so sudden and so great a change in the relations hitherto existing, the change from a toleration to which no one objected, to the most violent persecution, has received some attention at the hands of the most recent historian of this most remarkable period of the history of the empire, I mean Burckhardt, die Zeit Constantins des Grossen, Basel, 1853, p. 325 *sq.* He thinks that the question assumes another appearance when we consider the details of the position. If the government had had any idea of persecuting at a future time, it could never have allowed the Christians to grow up as they did, without resistance, till they became a power in the State. It may be said that the government became aware only late in the day, and only by degrees, that if absolute toleration were practised, Christianity would strive to gain the preponderance. But Diocletian was not so thoughtless. In judging of the case, we must start from the consideration that we are speaking of one of the greatest of the Roman emperors, a saviour of the empire and of civilisation, who had a most acute understanding of his age. If he had died in the year 302 his political memory would be very different from what it is now. What we have to do is to inquire whether what darkens this memory was a mere outbreak of cruelty and brutality which belonged to the man's nature, or was occasioned by superstition, or was a piece of wretched weakness towards his co-regents who stood so far below him. Or is it not the task of the historian to seek here for some way of escape not suggested by the written letter? This way of escape is thought to have been discovered in the supposition that the emperors believed themselves to have detected a plot of the Christians, who, conscious of their growing numbers and influence, were seeking to put themselves in possession of the imperial power. Some of them, perhaps only a very few Christian courtiers, and some Christian military commanders in the provinces, thought they could strike a *coup d'état* which would bring the imperium into the hands of Christians, or of persons friendly to the Christians; and perhaps they meant in doing this to spare the persons of the emperors. This hypothesis is supported by combinations which are too artificial and too venturous to count upon much acceptance; and even were it more probable than it is, it does not really bring us any further. Taking Diocletian's political wisdom and greatness as a ruler for our starting-point, it remains as incomprehensible as ever, if the catastrophe is so enigmatical as it is said, how a conspiracy not promoted by the Christians in general, but confined to a very few associates, could determine such an emperor to adopt measures, the far-reaching consequences of which, for the State, no one can have

and the heads of the Christian churches appeared in rapid succession in the year 303; and in the year 304 another was promulgated against the Christians in general; all of them allowing free course to the fanaticism of the people and the caprice and cruelty of the magistrates. The position of the Christians, however, varied very much, especially after the first storm was over, in accordance with the dispositions and the political interest of the various rulers

foreseen better than himself. Thus we are just thrown back upon the general position of affairs at the time for our guidance. Burckhardt's position leads him to form a very unfavourable opinion of the work extant under the name of Lactantius, de mortibus persecutorum. But whether written by Lactantius or by another, and however mean an opinion we may form of its literary value, it cannot well be denied that with all its misrepresentations and exaggerations it contains historical data capable of being used to good effect in the history of the period. Thus Burckhardt reckons it a great piece of folly in this writer to say that Diocletian, when he could no longer withstand Cæsar Galerius, hanc moderationem tenere conatus est, ut eam rem sine sanguine transigi juberet, cum Caesar vivos cremari vellet, qui sacrificio repugnassent (c. 11). But the edicts do not expressly mention any rem sanguine transigi, and the account of this writer is quite credible in this point, that Diocletian was only drawn gradually by his co-regents, from one step to another, deeper and deeper, into measures of persecution. Vogel, *op. cit.*, p. 109, accepts the account of Lactantius that Diocletian was not free in those transactions, but was in the hands of others, under the influence of the priests and of Galerius. Nor can, he says, the possibility of a connection with the revolts of the year 303 be well denied; only, Vogel thinks, all these things would never have forced Diocletian to the momentous act, had it not been a thing which his own theory required, a consequence of his own principles to which he had till now been restrained from giving effect by his disposition, by his understanding, and by the difficulties in the way of the consolidation of his power; but how reconcile these two things, the want of freedom and this inner tendency, and how can we understand, if his persecution of the Christians was so much in harmony with his principles, that he was so long of doing anything in this direction, and then went the full length all at once? We are thus brought back to the view that he only gave way to the urgency of others, and when the first step had once been taken, was obliged to take the others too. It can have come from nothing but his policy that he did not try before with regard to Christianity those measures which he had used in all their severity against Manichaeism. But it seems very clear that in the Christian persecutions he had a distinct intention. If he, as no other, caused himself to be worshipped as God, if he regarded himself as the high-priest, as it were, of a heathen State-church, and presented himself even outwardly as Zeus incarnate, ruling the world (comp. Vogel, p. 29 *sq.*, 39), it may well be, that having a presentiment of the approaching end of all this magnificence, he sought to overawe Christianity with all the splendour of the majesty of a Roman emperor in oriental style.

who administered the different provinces of the empire along with and after each other during the course of those eight years. The ecclesiastical writers write of the persecution in an exaggerating way, and cannot sufficiently describe its great severity, nor dilate with too great vividness upon the scenes which occurred in it.[1] A much more important task than to follow their narratives of martyrdoms is to attempt to seize those points of transition from which at last there proceeded as the great result, the very opposite of what the persecution was at first intended to bring about. Galerius himself, the chief instigator of the policy pursued up to this time, became convinced that it could not be successful, and turned to other thoughts. In April of the year 311 he issued from Nicomedia, in concert with Constantine and Licinius, the first of those remarkable edicts on religion[2] in which the triumph of Christianity over heathenism and over the Roman State was announced to the world as an accomplished fact.

The three emperors above-named say in their edict:[3] "Among other matters which they had devised for the good of the State, they had also determined to restore all things to the old laws and the discipline of the Roman State, and to see that the Christians also, who had left the sect of their ancestors, should return to good dispositions. For the Christians have been seized in a certain methodical way with such arrogance and such folly, that they did not observe those institutions of the ancients, first established perhaps by their ancestors, but made themselves laws according to their caprice and their own notions of what was right, in consequence of which they had founded various communities in various ways. When the command was issued that they should betake

[1] Niebuhr remarks, p. 295, that the persecution was not so dreadful as it is generally represented. Dodwell, he says, is quite right, that it was not even a shadow of what was done by the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands.

[2] In Lactantius, de mort. persec. c. 34. Eusebius, E. H., viii. 17.

[3] Compare Keim, die römischen Toleranzedicte für das Christenthum (311-313) und ihr geschichtlicher Werth. Theolog. Jahrb., 1852, p. 207 *sq.* Burckhardt, p. 395, only mentions these edicts cursorily, and enters into no closer discussion of them. Keim's Essay is worthy of attention.

themselves back to the institutions of the ancients, many were induced by the danger to submit themselves. But as most of them persisted in their purpose, and they (the emperors) had seen that they neither showed fitting honour to the gods, nor held to the God of the Christians, they desired, according to their custom of being gracious to all, to extend their grace to them also, on the condition that they should be Christians again, and should so arrange their meetings as to do nothing contrary to discipline. Now, therefore, according to the grace that has been shown to them, they are to pray to God for the welfare of the emperors and of the State, and for their own, that the State may continue well preserved in every respect, and they live quietly in their dwellings." The edict exhibits a remarkable contradiction of history. The persecution of the Christians by Diocletian is said to have been aimed not at Christianity itself, but only at that sectarianism which was undermining Christianity, and to have been undertaken not with a view to bring the Christians back to heathenism, but only to make them true Christians again. And what a contradiction it is, that although the Christians did not obey the imperial command, but persisted in their own way, and worshipped neither the heathen gods nor the God of the Christians, yet the imperial grace and forgiveness is to be extended to them. The only explanation of this contradiction is that it was desired to place Christianity in a different relation to the State, without acknowledging openly that the view hitherto taken of it had undergone a change. What the edict is to proclaim for the first time is spoken of as a relation already long subsisting; as if the State had become reconciled to Christianity long ago, it desires to have it as that only which in its true nature it is. In order to make it appear that the act of recognition made thus tardily has not been wrung from the State by necessity, the corrigere cuncta juxta leges veterum et publicam disciplinam Romanorum, which was alleged to have been the true object of the recent persecution, is represented as merely a reverting to the instituta veterum. Christianity accordingly is quietly reckoned among the instituta veterum, and the persecution

is said to have had an intention corresponding to this, as if it had referred not to the Christians as such, but only to the love of innovation of the Christian founders of sects. To this view of Christianity, as one of the instituta veterum, had the want of success which attended the persecution forced its authors to come; what withstood all attempts to suppress it proved itself thereby to be an old-established institution. Accordingly the recognition which was now extended to it on the part of the State took this form, that it was to subsist in the State in so far as it was and remained what it had been from the beginning, and did not degenerate into any caprice or innovation. This is the true notion of a religio licita. According to the view of antiquity, which, in matters of religion and politics regarded nothing with so great an aversion as *νεωτερίζειν*, the State could not by a special act make a religion a religio licita: the religion itself made itself this by its historical existence and the right of prescription, and all the State could do was accordingly to pronounce that right to exist, the real foundation of which lay in its origin and past history. But the great change which had now come about in the view taken of Christianity embraced the further point, that not only was it to be allowed to exist in the State, but it seemed necessary, in the interests of the State itself, to concede to it all the rights of a State-recognised religion. If it had been held with regard to the Christians till now, that they were subverting the State, they were now exhorted to pray for the welfare of the State, which was now looked for not only from the heathen gods, but from the God of the Christians too. Only we must not overlook that it is in one form of Christianity alone that the State is willing to repose this confidence. The distinction drawn in the edict between original and sectarian Christianity may have been meant first of all to provide a legal justification of the step which the State was now to take in recognising Christianity; but it was also intended to set forth the condition on which alone the recognition was made, namely, that it applied only to the original, true Christianity, which was at one with itself, or to the Christianity of the Catholic

Church, to which alone the category of instituta veterum could be properly applied.

This first edict was followed in the spring or summer of the year 312, before the fall of Maxentius, by a second, issued by Constantine and Licinius. This document not having been preserved to us, we are not acquainted with its exact contents, but we are able to infer what they were from the third edict, which was issued by the same two emperors at Milan in the beginning of the year 313, and directly refers to it.[1] The two edicts have thus to be taken together. In the third, which has been preserved to us, the emperors say:—"As we have long perceived that religious liberty ought not to be denied, but that freedom must be given to every one to manage his religious affairs according to his own conviction and choice, we have commanded that every one, and the Christians among the rest, shall keep his religion (without having another thrust upon him). But as many and various conditions were added to that edict, in which this liberty was conceded (the second), many have perhaps been repelled again, after a little while, from this cultus."[2] The emperors say they have met at Milan to consult regarding affairs of State, and had felt themselves especially called on to regulate matters relating to religion, in order to grant to the Christians and to all full religious freedom, so that all the gods in heaven might be gracious and favourable to them and to their subjects. "They have therefore considered it to be the most salutary and useful course, in no way to refuse freedom to any one to turn either to the cultus of the Christians or to

[1] Lact. de mort. persec., c. 48. Euseb. E. H. x. 5. Lactantius omits the introduction which Eusebius places in the emperors' mouths, and begins with the new provisions determined on at Milan in the year 313.

[2] Ἐπειδὴ πολλαὶ καὶ διάφοροι αἱρέσεις ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἀντιγραφῇ, ἐν ᾗ τοῖς αὐτοῖς συνεχωρήθη ἡ τοιαύτη ἐξουσία, ἐδόκουν προστεθεῖσθαι σαφῶς, etc. This is the fatal passage, from which chiefly it has come that the true meaning of these edicts has been as yet so little understood. Eusebius uses the word αἱρέσεις for the conditiones of Lactantius, and it has always been thought that sects were spoken of. It is true that Eusebius uses the word αἵρεσις in this sense immediately before our passage, but αἵρεσις is sometimes equivalent to conditio; and as Lactantius in his original text speaks immediately after of conditions where Eusebius speaks of αἱρέσεις, it is difficult to see how the passage could be so seriously misunderstood.

the religion which he judged the most suitable for himself, in order that the highest Deity, being obeyed with a free spirit, may show himself in all things favourable and benevolent. For this reason they have determined, after removal of all and every condition such as were contained in the former edict with regard to the Christians,[1] to take care that every one who wishes to adhere to the Christian religion may do so quite undisturbed and unmolested. They therefore announce that they have given to the Christians absolute freedom and warrant for their religious cultus, and others also are to have the same open and unlimited religious liberty, so that every one may worship whatever divinity he pleases, because they do not desire to detract anything from any cultus or any religion." We are at once struck with the repeated and studious assurance given in this edict of full and unconditional religious liberty, especially with regard to the Christians. We may confidently infer from it that this was the point where the preceding edict had come short of giving the desired satisfaction; in fact, it is expressly stated that the new edict is intended to remove those conditions by which it might be felt that limitations were still imposed on religious liberty. Thus we see that the Christian religion cannot have been allowed to every one—that there must have been some prohibition to the heathens to go over to it. We are thus obliged to suppose that, after the edict of the year 311 had declared the public toleration and recognition of Christianity, very many who were already Christians at heart, though outwardly still adhering to the heathen cultus, now openly went over to Christianity. And this doubtless was the reason that the emperors thought it incumbent on them to intervene with a measure of prevention and limitation, to restrain the going over to Christianity, at least on so large a scale. This was the object of the edict of the year 312. The fact that it was followed in so short a time by a third edict of so directly contrary tenor, as well as the contents

[1] Amotis omnibus omnino conditionibus, quae prius scriptis—super Christianorum nomine videbantur. Comp. Eus.: *ἵν' ἀφαιρεθεισῶν παντελῶς τῶν αἱρέσεων, αἵτινες κ.τ.λ. καὶ ἄτινα πάνυ σκαιὰ καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας πραΰτητος ἀλλότρια εἶναι ἐδόκει ταῦτα ὑφαιρεθῇ.*

and the whole style of the latter, point indisputably to a state of commotion and fermentation caused by the imposition of the new compulsory measures, and the prospect of further compulsion among the whole Christian population, and especially the population of the countries of the West. The discontent thus aroused must have been pronounced so unmistakably that the two emperors saw themselves compelled to declare, in the plainest and most unconditional way, that entire religious liberty was to be allowed in future, and that especially with regard to Christianity no doubts or anxieties of this sort were now to arise.[1] They would have the less difficulty in dealing thus with the public anxiety, as there can be no doubt that, even with the greater part of the heathen population, persecutions of the Christians were no longer regarded with favour.

But we should mistake the tendency of these three edicts, and especially of the last one, in which the two others reach their termination, did we suppose it to have been their object merely to set up the principle of universal religious liberty. It is plainly to be seen that Christianity is the centre of all the provisions contained in those edicts, and that reference is made to the other religions and to religious liberty in general, only in connection with the position which it is desired to give to Christianity. The Christians are the principal persons; every one is to be at liberty to go

[1] Maximin, the ruler of the countries of the East, also issued proclamations in consequence of the three edicts, and of similar tenor. The edict of the three emperors of the year 311 is represented by the proclamation of the procurator Sabinus, quoted by Eusebius in an unsuitable place, ix. 1. Sabinus can only have issued this proclamation under the directions of Maximin. Here also toleration is granted to the Christians, if, giving up their own caprice, they come together to the firmly closed unity of their ἴδιον ἔθνος, their religion, their cultus. This belongs to the spring of the year 311. Half a year later Maximin was again persecuting the Christians (Euseb. ix. 2). Soon afterwards he issued the edict of Euseb. ix. 9, 10, which answers to the two edicts of the emperors. According to the latter of the year 313, it appears that in the earlier one of the year 312 he also desired to grant rest to the Christians, under the condition of a worship that was united, and came together to a compact whole; ἐάν τις βούλοιτο τῷ τοιούτῳ ἔθνει (the ἔθνος Χριστιανῶν) ἢ τῇ αὐτῇ φυλακῇ τῆς αὐτῆς θρησκείας ἕπεσθαι, Euseb. ix. 10.—Keim, *op. cit.* pp. 216, 229 *sq.*

over to them; they are to have complete liberty, and only that they may enjoy it without limitation are others to have it as well. This appears very plainly in the special provisions in favour of the Christians which are contained in the second part of the third edict. Their places of meeting and church property, if they have been bought by others or acquired by way of gift, are to be given back to the corpus Christianorum, the Christian Church, without any hesitation, and without the least demand of any price, except in so far as the State holds out some prospect of compensation. The governors are to set on foot with all energy the work of restoring these possessions, and they are to be restored without delay, that in this point also due care may be taken for the public peace, and that the divine grace, already experienced in so great matters, may still further accompany the undertakings of the rulers. When we consider how immediately the concessions here made to the Christian Church were followed by other ordinances passed by Constantine in favour of the Christians, as in particular the exemption of the Christian clergy from burdensome public services, which was granted so early as March 313; when we consider further the tone of profound respect in which the Christian Church is spoken of in the documents of the period; again, in how obliging and liberal a way Constantine behaved even at this time to the heads of the Christian churches, and how the bishop Hosius of Cordova, who came afterwards to advise him in such weighty matters, was even then, in the year 313, standing at his side,—we see, in a word, that even in the edict of the year 313 the step was taken by which Christianity was elevated to the religion of the State. Yet from the very first it is meant to be distinctly understood that it is only Christianity in the Catholic Church, with which, meeting it in its representatives, the State desires to enter into this new relation. The first edict states it as the chief objection to be made against the Christians that they are divided into sects and parties, and in the third edict it is repeatedly said that all the concessions made to the Christians are meant to apply only to the corpus Christianorum; they are to be extended to the Christians

only in so far as they form a great corporation, namely, the Catholic Church. Here we touch probably the deepest point of the sympathy by which Constantine felt himself attracted to Christianity and the Christian Church. Nothing is more characteristic of him, and nothing lets us see deeper into the inner moving powers of this remarkable period of transition, than the genuinely catholic interest and desire for unity which Constantine brought with him from his political standpoint, and which enabled him to meet the Church halfway. This was the principle of the regeneration of the Roman Empire which was now about to come to pass in Christianity, and after which even Diocletian had been striving in his system of reorganisation when he sought to arrest the process of the disintegration of the empire, and to hold it energetically together by means of a plurality of rulers. In no other point had Constantine a better understanding with the Christian Church, in no other point do we see so thoroughly as here the same Constantine before us from the beginning to the end. He was in the year 313 just what he was afterwards, the emperor who fraternised with the bishops, who, in fact, aimed at being himself nothing but a bishop, who regarded the calling that he had as the highest guardian of peace, as equally divine with that of the bishops, and counted himself happy if only the bishops regarded him as their associate and colleague.[1] Eusebius gives, along with the edict of 313, a number of other writings of the emperor more or less contemporary with it,[2] and it is certainly remarkable how we find in them again and again the same characteristic trait of a powerful desire for unity. Concord and unity are everywhere his first requirement; nothing distresses him more than division among the people or strife among the bishops. In theological questions and controversies he sees nothing but unseemly disputes, a love of strife, private feuds, bad dispositions, perversity, godlessness, madness. The originators of such controversies are men of no right disposition or behaviour, seducers of the people of the most holy Catholic Church, who

[1] Eusebius, Vita Const. i. 44; ii. 68, 69; iv. 24.
[2] Eusebius, E. H. x. 5-7.

forget not only the duty of brotherly unity, but even the respect which they owe to the most holy faith, and turn Christianity into a laughing-stock for those who do not believe in it. It is therefore his warm desire to put a stop to controversies, and bring back everything to the proper service and faith; indeed, he speaks, even in the summer of the year 313, of the reverence he feels for the Catholic Church, and which impels him to ask the bishops not to allow any kind of schism or division in any place, as of a fact with which Miltiades, bishop of Rome, to whom he was writing, was well acquainted. To restore this unity where it had been disturbed, he regarded, even at this date, as both his right and his duty, because it lay heavy on his heart that there should be divisions in the provinces which divine providence had committed to him. The controversies which occurred in those times, the Donatist and the Arian, gave the emperor abundant opportunity to put those principles in practice. The zeal with which he sought to restore the unity of the Church, which these controversies had disturbed, was the fruit of a strong conviction that unity, as everywhere, so particularly in religion, was the most essential condition of the strength and might of the empire. That this idea was the leading maxim of his government we learn from himself. He expresses it in various places, but most distinctly in the missive which he sent to Alexandria, on hearing of the outbreak of the Arian controversy, addressed to the heads of the two parties, Alexander the bishop, and Arius the presbyter.[1] Here he begins by saying that the first object he had proposed to himself was to unite the religions of all nations, that they should have the same form and nature; and the second, to restore to health the body of civil society, which had suffered as it were from a grievous sickness. On the first object he had fixed his thought with the hidden eye of the mind, the other he had sought to bring about by military force, in the conviction that if he should succeed in his desire, and bring to pass general unity among all the servants of God, the fruit of this would be seen in the body politic, as well as in a

[1] Eusebius, Vita Const. ii. 64 *sq.*

change answering to the pious disposition of all. Then after expressing the utmost indignation at the intolerable frenzy which in the Donatist schism had seized the whole of Africa, and in the most thoughtless and inconsiderate way had rent into different heresies the religion of the churches, he cannot sufficiently deplore that now he is obliged to hear of a new and yet more grievous division. The whole tendency of his epistle is thus to insist with all emphasis upon the duty of general unity. This is regarded as the one thing to be kept in view; to such an extent indeed is this position taken up, that in comparison with this great end even such a controversy as the Arian appears to be occupied with quite subordinate and unimportant matters. He desires to step between the contending parties in the character of supreme ruler for peace, and to adjure them to cease of their own accord from the temptations of the devil. The great God and the common Redeemer of all, he says, has made the common light to arise for all; and surely they may suffer him, the servant of God, under his providence to bring his endeavours to a good end, that by his address to them and by his efforts and the urgency of his exhortation the churches of God may be brought to a common unity. If there was agreement on the main point, divisions and separation must not be allowed to arise for the sake of such unimportant controversies. At the synod at Nice he expressed himself in the same way, and declared it to be the highest of all blessings to see before him an assembly in which general unity of view and disposition prevailed.[1] This, and in fact all the points which we have passed in review, are so intimately connected with the programme of his reign which he set forth in the edict of Milan, as to bring before us with sufficient clearness how the thought of unity and the effort after unity, the monarchical tendency, was the principle which from first to last determined his individuality.

What further light do we still require in order to a historical comprehension of the character of the epoch of which Constantine is the principal figure? Are we to find the key to the explanation

[1] Eusebius, Vita Const. iii. 12, 17, 21.

of it in the legend, so ambiguous, and in spite of its authentic voucher, so unauthenticated, of the miraculous vision which is said to have appeared to Constantine on his march against Maxentius?[1] In such an account of the matter let those find satisfaction to whom petty personal matters are wont to stand higher than the great process of history, and in whose eyes the strange and miraculous is of more value than the simple truth of historical facts. Nay even that question which is generally held to be the most signal example, in this field of history, of that method of historical treatment which seeks to trace results to their causes, whether Constantine's going over to Christianity and the consequent elevation of Christianity to the State religion, was a matter more of politics or of inner religious conviction on Constantine's part, is without any real importance. It cannot possibly lead to a correct view, because it sets out by seeking to reduce the historical importance which Christianity reached in Constantine to a mere momentum of his personality, and is only in doubt whether it owed this importance more to the politics of Constantine or to his religion. But we may say in general that Christianity was indebted, for the importance which it then attained, to no one but itself. Accordingly, if a distinction of this nature be drawn at all, it must be answered in favour of the politics of Constantine, since politics are nothing but a correct appreciation of the relations which determine the centre of gravity of an age. Christianity had

[1] In the treasury of anecdote of Neander's Church History this legend could not of course be wanting. The incident is not to count as a miracle, for we stand on the platform of a Christian view of history. But instead of this we have psychological analysis, and the result of this psychological watering down of history is as follows:—"Now it is very possible, that either of himself or hearing it suggested by the Christians in his company, he thought he saw in the shape of the clouds or in some other object the figure of the cross. Thus he was led to conceive the hope that he would conquer through the might of the God of the Christians," etc. Thus the great world-historical revolution of those times was due to the chance occurrence of a certain shape in the clouds, such as may serve to amuse a child's fancy. Compare the apt remarks of Keim on Neander's view, *op. cit.* p. 251, and Burckhardt, p. 394 *sq.* It is also inconceivable how Neander can separate the second and third edict from the first by placing a period between them.

become an objective power of the age, and carried in itself the necessity of being recognised. The greatness of Constantine, what makes him one of those world-historical characters who are the individual expression of the spirit of their age, is simply and solely this, that he understood his age, and had the capacity to take up into himself, and to join with himself in a personal unity, what the genius of the time had to deposit in his hands in Christianity. Though so significant a warning had gone forth between the second and the third edict, the right time had not yet gone by for the world freely to measure itself with Christianity. The last great attempt against Christianity had been without result, and had only exposed the weakness and powerlessness of the heathen world, and the inner dissolution which had seized upon the ancient faith. It was now evident that the substantial power of the age was Christianity, and that alone, as the Corpus Christianorum with the strong, well-articulated organisation of the Catholic Church. Only in this form did Constantine know Christianity, and it was only the grand unity to which the episcopal system of the Church had even then been developed, which excited in him so great reverence. Thus he came to see in the Christian Church the power by which the Roman empire, so much in need of regeneration, could gain the strength and capacity needed for that process. Thus there was an approach on both sides, in the interests not less of the one than of the other. The real power of the age resided in Christianity alone: amid the dissolution of all the forms which held the old world together, it only formed a firm and compact unity, in which it was able to offer a new body to the State now falling to pieces. On the other side, it was no less for the interests of Christianity that the form of the Roman empire, founded as it was in history, should be that in which it became the ruling power of the world. In a word, if there was still to be a Roman empire, this was possible only under the condition that a Christian emperor should now stand at its head. Thus it was nothing but an inner necessity, lying in the changed relations of the world themselves, which forced the two powers to come together into one: on the one side,

Christianity, in the form of the Church and the episcopate, which now once more built the bridge over which Christianity went forward to a new stage of its historical development; and on the other, the Roman empire, being still in name at least what in reality it was no longer. It is nothing but the objective process of the thing itself that provides the force for further motion. In the life of Constantine, in fact, there is no personal information as to the decisive step of his going over to Christianity. Indeed he even postponed his baptism, as if such an act had ceased to be necessary for him, the Christian emperor, to the very end of his life. Thus considered, the whole change which we are now considering has an entirely political character, and history has in reality no great object for inquiring what relation Constantine's own religious convictions bore to the great process.[1] Yet the religious element, in so far as it belongs to the question at all, does in a certain way assert itself. When a power has advanced by the road of historical development, and come to be a patent and evident objective reality, it must be held to be religion in a man that leads him to recognise it for what it is, to see in it a divine evidence, and in the consciousness of his own subjective dependence to bow before it as a higher power. This kind of religiosity we cannot in any case deny to Constantine. If we are to put the question as to his religion, there can be no doubt that this was the real substratum of his religious consciousness. He gives a clear manifestation of this religious disposition of his mind, when he characterises the efforts of his antagonists as nothing but a tyranny hostile to God.[2] In conflict with him, the friend of Christians and of Christianity, they had to rely solely on what still remained of the power of heathenism, and thus they set themselves against the spirit of the age. They were the enemies and adversaries of

[1] Here I am in essential agreement, though on quite independent grounds, with Burckhardt's estimate of Constantine, *op. cit.*, p. 346 *sq.*, 389 *sq.* As for Eusebius, I cannot but agree with Burckhardt that in everything relating to Constantine he is a very untrustworthy panegyrist, and is guided by the Christian hierarchical interest.

[2] Thus, in Euseb. Vita Const. iii. 12, he speaks of a *θεομαχία τυράννων*.

God, because they fought against a cause which history plainly showed to be the declared will of God; and they were tyrants, since, from this same reason, they were without any justification for their power and rule. It was therefore a perfectly idle and futile attempt that Licinius made, when for the last time he held up the standard of paganism; he did so at a time when it had long been clear that the chance of battle could fall in no other way than it did.

Thus, harsh and repellent as the relations of Christianity to the Roman State were at the beginning, and sharp as the antithesis was which they could not but present to each other, now at last they came together peacefully and harmoniously to the most intimate unity. Christianity and the Roman State now travel hand in hand on the way of the historical development which still lies before them, and it seems as if no force in the world could again sunder the two powers so closely united with each other. But what enabled Christianity to gain a victory which men of every age have felt that they could not but regard as one of the greatest wonders of the world's history? The cause lay, first of all, in the definiteness and the traditional significance of the forms by which Christianity united its adherents to the most intimate communion among themselves. No religion can attain to historical importance without a form of association resting on an authority that has been long recognised. Faith in Jesus as the Messiah who had appeared and was to come again in the next times, was a characteristic enough bond of association for those who believed in him. The more intimately it united them among themselves, the more decided was the contrast it caused them to present to the whole world by which they were surrounded. They had but two alternatives before them, either they must conquer the world or they must perish in the struggle with it. After the christological consciousness of the Christian churches had been so far developed, that Christ could not be thought of as the head of the Church in his divine dignity without the churches having at their head an overseer and president representing him, the episcopate became the

form of the association of the Church. On the one side, this institution was capable of endless development, while, on the other, it was calculated to unite all its members together in the closest possible way; and it both went back into the past, and reached forward to the future. It may with truth be asserted that it was the episcopate alone that rendered possible the historical development of Christianity, and prepared its way to a world-historical future. This it did because it united in itself things divine and things human, things spiritual and things worldly, the high and the lowly, the near and the distant; and while by no means closed to what was transcendental in the Christian consciousness, did not fail, on the other side, to recognise the facts given in real life and the needs of the present. So often as an important crisis was reached in the history of the development of Christianity, so often did it prove that the episcopate came forward to effect the needed conciliation. It was the episcopate which cleared away the dangers and perversions even of Gnosticism and Montanism, which cut off the extremes of all the heresies, and provided for the Catholic Church in an increasing measure that assured and even basis which it required for an existence calculated to endure in the future. And without doubt it was the bishops who, when the heaviest blow of the last persecutions had not without good reason been aimed persistently at their heads, mainly contributed to the guidance of the Christian Church and of the Roman State through the transition to the new form of their relations to each other. But, we are obliged to ask again, what was it that made it so great a need for Christianity to have such forms as would enable it to embrace a wider and wider area, what was the inner in this outer form? The simple answer to this question appears to lie in the impressions and results which Christianity cannot but produce in all susceptible minds. And yet regarding these history has very little to tell us. How many were converted to faith in Christ by the comfort of the Gospel and all the spiritual blessings it conveys, this is recorded in no annals of history, but belongs entirely to the secret history of the human heart, from which scarcely even a faint report is carried

into that general history which passes over individuals so lightly and rapidly. Nor indeed, from the very nature of the case, could these, whatever we may say of them, belong to the first and most obvious effects produced by Christianity in its contact with the heathen world. Forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, comfort and peace of conscience, these every religion gives in its own way, nor could all this be found wanting in the heathen religions, if only one believed in the gods, whose gift these highest blessings of the spiritual life would be found to be. As soon indeed as faith in the gods themselves had disappeared, the indispensable condition had been lost for receiving all that could be looked for as their gift. And for this reason the main question at issue in the struggle between Christianity and heathenism lay, not on the side of the heart anxious for salvation, thirsting for the consolation of the Gospel, but rather on the side of the reason, asking above all as to the truth of its ideas. The one great and pressing point to be settled was as to the truth and meaning which polytheism, the belief in the gods of the heathen religion, might still possess for the religious consciousness. Regarding from this point of view the relation of Christianity to the heathen world confronting it, and the great result of the first three centuries of Christianity, how little can we wonder that it gained at this time so general and so decided a victory over that heathen world? How many would there be at this time whose imagination the old mythical doctrine of the gods still influenced with its magic charm? In the early days of the empire even a religion so repugnant to all heathen notions as the Jewish made a great number of proselytes, and this may surely teach us how easily the religious consciousness of the heathen turned away from his old gods. And if we consider further with how pronounced and energetic an opposition Christianity confronted the whole system of heathen polytheism, and how, in all the conflicts which were waged between Christianity and heathenism, the main point was that of acknowledging or denying the heathen gods,[1] we cannot be surprised at the result

[1] Compare a refutation of the heathen belief in the gods in Tert. Apol. c. 10 *sq.*

that the victory did not remain much longer undecided. For who were those among whom the old faith still had its most active defenders? On the one side the coarse fanatical populace, with whom this faith had turned into the most utter superstition, and blind hatred against the Christians was the one acting motive; on the other side was the small class of those who were led from reasons of State-interest to wish this religion maintained, or who more or less unconsciously foisted into it another meaning, in the light of their Platonic idealism. But between these two classes there was the very considerable middle class, the numerous members of which belonged neither to the political grandees nor to the philosophical illuminati, nor yet to the lowest class of the people, but composed the ordinary citizen-class, of more or less cultivation. Of this class were those people of whom, as Christians, Celsus and Lucian speak with such contempt, those artisans, those weavers, shoemakers, and tanners, who knew so little how to come forward publicly, but proved so active in the matters of their faith in secret and by themselves. It was in the purer and less prepossessed mind of this class that Christianity had found from the beginning the most receptive soil for its operations, inasmuch as they were the least restrained by all the prejudices and interests of the other classes from finally dissolving in their sober practical reason the weak bond still holding them to the faith in the old gods. If people of this class had little opportunity, especially in the political circumstances of that period, to play any part upon the stage of public life, it was the more probable that Christianity would make greater and greater progress among them privately, and on an increasing scale withdraw from the faith in the old gods the ground of its existence. Thus at last the time arrived when in the midst of the heathen population a new generation had arisen, the existence of which all at once opened the eyes of the heathen potentates to the abyss on the brink of which the heathen State was standing. The words of Tertullian, in which he describes the strength which the Christian population had even in his day attained, are not perhaps to be taken literally; some deduction

may be made on account of a rhetorical mode of statement. Yet, for all this, they are sufficient to enable us to estimate the importance which Christianity had acquired even in his day in the provinces of the Roman Empire. Hesterni sumus, the inspired apologist of Christianity exclaims to the heathen, et vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum; sola vobis reliquimus templa. Cui bello non idonei, non prompti fuissemus, etiam impares copiis, qui tam libenter trucidamur, si non apud ipsam disciplinam magis occidi liceret, quam occidere. Potuimus et inermes, nec rebelles, sed tantummodo discordes solius divortii invidia adversus vos dimicasse. Si enim, tanta vis hominum, in aliquem orbis remoti sinum abrupissemus a vobis, suffudisset utique dominationem vestram tot qualiumcunque civium amissio, immo etiam et ipsa destitutione punisset. Procul dubio expavissetis ad solitudinem vestram, ad silentium rerum et stuporem quendam quasi mortui orbis. Quaesissetis, quibus imperaretis. Plures hostes quam cives vobis remansissent. Nunc enim pauciores hostes habetis prae multitudine Christianorum paene omnium civitatum, pene omnes cives Christianos habendo, sed hostes maluistis vocare generis humani potius quam erroris humani.[1]

And now let it be considered how much this state of affairs must have increased in the course of a century, after so long a period of repose, and such ineffectual persecutions. What the Emperor Maximin, the last vehement persecutor of the Christians, said in his edict issued to put a stop to hostilities in the year 312, was certainly quite in accordance with the truth, that the Emperors Diocletian and Maximian had seen that almost all men had left the worship of the gods and mixed themselves up with the people of the Christians.[2] The ground of the old religion had long been undermined in all directions, when Constantine followed the impulse of the time which carried him, and placed by it on its summit, erected on the place deserted by the old gods the symbol of the cross.

[1] Tert. Apol. c. 37.

[2] Euseb. E. H. ix. 9. An ἔθνος Χριστιανῶν is spoken of here, as a Corpus Christianorum in the edict of the year 311.

PART SIXTH.

CHRISTIANITY AS A MORAL RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE IN ITS ABSOLUTENESS AND ITS LIMITATION IN TIME.

THUS the word with which the founder of Christianity began the preaching of the Gospel, that the confessors of his doctrine are not only the poor in spirit, whose is the kingdom of heaven, but also the meek who shall inherit the earth, was fulfilled in this last particular also, and proved true by the external history of Christianity in the first three centuries in which it was a part of the history of the world. The thoughtful historian, when he fixes the point at which Christianity stands in the great epoch of its fortunes which is marked by Constantine, cannot but look back to the beginning and to the principle from which all those phenomena proceeded which are contained in the history of the first three centuries. That sense of poverty, the feeling in which the first adherents of Jesus confronted the world and looked on themselves as the poor, but the poor in spirit whose outward physical poverty was but the symbol and the earnest of that which they possessed in thinking of the kingdom of heaven, the very opposite of poverty, stands before us here in the whole power of an all-commanding, world-conquering principle. To nothing but its principle, the power working within it, is Christianity indebted for all that it has grown to be externally in the course of time. And the greater the effects which have flowed from this principle, the more certainly do they authenticate it as proceeding from a divine origin. There are more ways than one of defining this divine element in the origin and the principle of Christianity. We may speak of the

Son of God incarnate in humanity, or of the spirit poured out upon the first community of believers in Jesus, or of the spirit in the sense of the apostle Paul, whom we find identifying the divine Spirit which works in believers with the immediate self-consciousness of the Christians in such a way that we can only conceive of it as the principle of the Christian consciousness. But in any case, when the principle is compared with its effects it can only be considered as one essentially moral in its character. The only way in which any religion can prove the divinity of its origin and principle is by the moral effect which it produces, by the moral power and energy which it calls forth in its adherents. Now undoubtedly there has never been a greater and more penetrating change of the world, one that has more distinctly made an epoch both in respect of its extent outwardly and of its inner significance, than that which came to pass through Christianity. But what would the change that took place in the religious faith and the ideas of mankind amount to, without a corresponding moral change? Of what profit would it have been that the world turned from polytheism to monotheism, and instead of setting its hopes upon a Messiah still to come in the future, believed in one already come, and worshipped in him the Son of God in the highest sense, had not the world become another world in its moral disposition and its moral conduct, and had not those phenomena in which the immorality of the ancient world is so characteristically manifested been displaced by genuinely moral virtue and religion? Christianity itself defines the work which it designs to do in man, describes the essence of the change it aims at producing in him, as a regeneration and renewal of the whole man. If this be so, then this power which re-forms man must prove itself historically by a moral regeneration brought about in the public life of humanity. And in fact it is just this that gives the period of the first three centuries of Christianity, regarded from the most universal point of view, that of morals and religion, its greatest importance.

What we have here to consider is not what Christianity brought to pass in particular individuals, in the hidden depths of their

inner life, but its effects on a large scale, what appeared as the noblest fruit of its influence in the common public life of the nations. And looking at the subject in this way we have every right to say that the world actually became through Christianity a morally purer and better world. This applies of course only to the limited circle to which the influence of Christianity directly extended. But the change appears, as from the nature of the case we should expect, in all those points at which Christianity was brought into near and immediate contact with the prevailing moral corruption of the heathen world, and is here an undeniable historical fact. The heathen adversaries of Christianity refused to allow to it even the credit of being a moral religion, and went so far as to accuse it of the deepest moral perversity and profligacy. The answer of the Christians to these accusations was simply to point to those phenomena, patent to all, in which the life of the Christians exhibited a genuinely moral character. Let any one read the writings of the Christian apologists of the second century, and judge whether they could have ventured to come forward with such speeches to defend and to describe Christianity, had they not been speaking the truth. If the facts had been quite otherwise—if that simple unfeigned piety and fear of God, that shrinking from everything immoral and forbidden in which was expressed the constant sense of the presence of a God who sees in secret and judges according to strict righteousness, that uprightness, faithfulness, and straightforwardness in all the relations of social life, that chastity, and that purity of manners which turned away from all sensual delights, that hearty self-sacrificing benevolence from which not even enemies and injurers were shut out, that devoted and ever constant patience which displayed in sufferings, as if they were the true calling of the Christian, the highest exercise of moral qualities, and all those virtues which have at all times been regarded as the fairest fruits and the most certain evidence of the truly Christian mind,—if these characteristics had not actually and most unmistakably distinguished the Christian community from the heathen world, then the apologists could not have used

the language they did.[1] And what made the difference all the more noticeable was that in many things peculiarly entering into the life of the ancient world the Christians took no part, for the simple reason that they could not combine it with their Christian notions. Not only did they avoid everything that could bring them into contact with the heathen demon-worship, but they also kept away from places where they could not appear without partaking in the idle search for pleasure, the coarse delight in spectacles, the shameless licentiousness of heathen manners. On this point we need only consider how, for example, Tertullian, not here under the influence of his Montanistic rigour, judges as to participation in the heathen spectacles. God, he says, has enjoined upon us to deal with the Holy Spirit, since he is in his own nature tender and soft, with calmness and gentleness, peace and quiet, and not to agitate him by rage or ill-nature or anger or grief. How then can he accord with the spectacles? Every spectacle is not without strong agitation of spirit. They are likewise commanded to keep all immodesty far from them. On this ground they are excluded from the theatre, where immodesty has taken up its abode, and nothing is in repute but what is disreputable

[1] Compare particularly such passages as Justin, Apol. i. cap. 12 *sq.* Athenagoras, Leg., cap. 31 *sq.* Tertullian, Apol., cap. 39 *sq.* The Christians examined by Pliny also appealed, in proof of the blamelessness of the Christian life, to the fact that se sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati denegarent (comp. 1 Pet. iv. 15). On the honour and conscientiousness of the Christians in the payment of their taxes to the State, also insisted on by Justin, Apol. i. cap. 17, Tertullian says, Apol. cap. 42, Vectigalia gratias Christianis agent ex fide dependentibus debitum, qua alieno fraudando abstinemus, ut, si ineatur, quantum vectigalibus pereat fraude et mendacio vestrarum professionum, facile ratio haberi possit, unius speciei querela compensata pro commodo ceterarum rationum. (What the State loses by the Christians not taking part in the heathen sacrificial worship is sufficiently made up by their honesty in other matters.) There is scarcely any finer evidence to the truly moral spirit with which Christianity confronted the heathen world, than that contained in Tertullian's De Patientia. Compare especially the conclusion, cap. 15, where Tertullian sums up the qualities with which patience is described as the soul of practical Christianity, and where he contrasts the truly Christian heavenly patience with the falsa probrosa patientia gentium terrae.

elsewhere. What it is wrong to say, it is also wrong to hear. Very decidedly does Tertullian reject the false reasons by which Christians endeavoured to show the justifiableness of such pleasures; appealing, for example, to the fact that they were nowhere expressly forbidden in Scripture. Never and in no place can that be excused which God condemns, never and in no place can that be allowed which is always and everywhere forbidden. It is required by pure truth and the fear of God, which ever remains the same, that we should not change our judgment according to circumstances. What is truly good or evil can never be anything else. In God's truth everything stands sure. The heathen who have not the complete truth, because they have not God for the teacher of truth, explain good and evil according to their own will and pleasure; what is counted good in one place is counted bad in another, and what is called bad in one place is called good in another. Everything is of the devil that is not of God, or that displeases God. All this belongs to the pomp of the devil, which we renounce in the symbol of our faith. But what we have once renounced by an oath, therein we are no longer free to take part either by word or act or look. Do we not rescind our oath when we sin against that which we testified in it? Shall we ask an answer from the heathens themselves? Let them declare to us if it is permissible for a Christian to be present at a spectacle. It is just in this that they recognise that a man has become a Christian, that he renounces the spectacles. God keep far from his own so great a desire for a pernicious pleasure![1] We see at once how principles like these must have found their application in many directions besides, where the Christians came in contact with the public life of the ancient world, and how earnest and severe a character they must have given to the view the Christians took of life, and to their whole behaviour.[2] If, from there being

[1] De spectac. cap. 15 *sqq.*

[2] Here we have to mention two writings of Tertullian, De habitu muliebri and de cultu feminarum (or the two books de cultu feminarum), in which, here also without being specially influenced by Montanist principles, he exhorts Christian

so many things in it in which they could not take part without injuring and denying their moral convictions, they were kept at a distance from the heathen world, it necessarily followed that they fell out of relations with the public and political life of that ancient world. It was thus involved in the circumstances in which they were placed, that as they retired from public life, they formed a closer community among themselves. But the opinion formed of them by some was altogether unjust, that their union was a purely political association. The reason why aims of such a character were imputed to them was, that the religious and moral bond which united them lay entirely outside of the sphere of vision of the heathen world. In fairness, Tertullian says,[1] this sect should be counted among the tolerated associations, since none of those things is done by it which are generally dreaded at the hands of forbidden associations. "We, who are cold to all ambition, have no motive for political associations; nothing is more out of our way than politics. We look upon the world as the common state for all." Yet this retirement, necessitated by the very nature of the case, from the public and political life of the heathen world, was by no means to be construed into an admission on the part of the Christians that they had no wish to be of service for the practical aims of society apart from politics.[2] "How," Tertullian urges on the heathens who took this view of the life of the Christians,

women to distinguish themselves from the heathen women by the sobriety and dignity of their dress as well as in other ways. "What cause have you," he says, in the latter work, cap. 11, "to appear in public with great finery, removed as you are from the occasions which call for such exhibitions? You do not visit the temples, nor demand public shows, nor do you know the festivals of the heathens. It is for those gatherings to see and to be seen that all that finery is exhibited. But you have none but serious causes for appearing in public. A difference ought to be showed between God's handmaids and the handmaids of Satan, that you may serve as an example to them." The Paedagogus of Clement of Alexandria gives in the second and third books a great variety of directions for the moral conduct of Christians, only they go too much into particulars and petty details.

[1] Apol. cap. 38.

[2] They would not allow themselves, Tertullian says in his Apology, cap. 42, to be called infructuosi in negotiis.

"can this be asserted of men who live with you, and share with you the same food and clothing, the same requirements of life? For we are no Brahmans or Gymnosophists of the Indias, no denizens of the woods who flee from the world. We are very mindful of the thanks we owe to God the Lord, as the Creator. We reject no enjoyment of his gifts; we only keep our enjoyment of them moderate, and are careful not to abuse them. Hence we inhabit this world along with you, not without sharing with you markets and fairs, baths and workshops, and the rest of the commerce of life. We carry on along with you navigation and military service, agriculture and commerce. We share your trade with you, and contribute our labour also for your use." Thus a new community was being founded in the midst of the heathen world—a community resting on a genuinely moral basis, and contrasting the more with the life of the heathen world the more the heathens were wanting in those elements of life in which men are connected with each other by moral bonds, by love and a brotherly disposition. "Especially are you jealous," Tertullian says, in this connection,[1] "of what love brings to pass among us. Behold, it is said, how they love one another! This must indeed appear striking to them, for they hate one another. And how they are ready to die for one another! Yes, for they, on the contrary, are ready rather to murder one another. And that we call one another brethren sounds suspiciously to them, for no other reason than that with them all names of consanguinity are assumed in mere pretence of affection. We are your brothers also, according to the law of that common nature which is the author of us all, though you as unkind brothers deny that human nature. But much more fittingly are those called and counted brothers who have been led to the knowledge of the one God as their Father, who have received one spirit of holiness, who have awakened out of the same darkness of ignorance into the light of the same truth. And we, who are bound together in mind and soul, do not hesitate to share our earthly goods with one another. With us all

[1] Apol. cap. 39.

things are common, only there we do not allow the principle of community, where it is generally practised by other men." Tertullian is here referring to married life among the Christians. In connection with marriage and the life of the family, it was to be expected that the moral spirit which inspired the community of the Christians would peculiarly manifest its ennobling influence. The greater the value the Christians attached to chastity and moral self-discipline, the more sacredness would the bond of marriage have in their eyes. Marriage itself was regarded as a thing religious, and it early became customary to form the bond of marriage not without the sanction of religion and the blessing of the Church.[1] How deep and tender is the feeling with regard to the importance of marriage expressed in the following description of Tertullian: —"How can I set forth the happiness of a marriage which the Church approves, which the oblation confirms, the sealing of which is announced by angels, which the Father holds for ratified? Even on earth sons do not rightly and lawfully wed without their fathers' consent. What kind of yoke is that of two believers, of one hope, one conversation, the same service? Both are brethren; both are fellow-servants; there is no difference of spirit or of flesh; they are truly two in one flesh. Where there is one flesh there is also one spirit; they pray together, fast together, lead and admonish one another. They are together in the church of God, in sorrow and in joy; neither conceals anything from the other; neither is troublesome to the other. With freedom the sick is visited and the needy supported. Psalms and hymns echo between the two, and they emulate one another which shall sing better to the Lord. Christ rejoices when he sees and hears such things; to such he sends his own peace. Where two are there he is also, and where

[1] Tert. de Monog. c. 11: Ut — in Deo nubas secundum legem et apostolum — qualis es id matrimonium postulans — ab episcopo monogamo a presbyteris et diaconis ejusdem sacramenti — ? — Conjungent vos in ecclesia virgine, unius Christi unica sponsa. (In this passage Tertullian is speaking against second marriage.) De Pudic. c. 4: Penes nos occultae quoque conjunctiones, id est, non priùs apud ecclesiam professae, juxta moechiam et fornicationem judicari periclitantur: Ad Uxorem 2. 9 he exalts the happiness ejus matrimonii, quod ecclesia conciliat, et confirmat oblatio et obsignatum angeli renunciant, pater rato habet.

he is there the evil one cannot come."[1] The description of a marriage like this evidently borrows many of its traits from the ideal, yet it is clear that only the moral spirit of Christianity had the power to give birth to such an ideal. Here we notice a further point. Such intimate wedded intercourse as Tertullian speaks of is possible only on the basis that both the parties have equal rights. Thus it is an essential feature of the notion of marriage to which Christianity gave rise, that the woman stands in a much freer and more independent relation to the man than was generally the case in the ancient world. It was required by the Christian notion of marriage that the woman was raised above the servile position she had hitherto occupied. But this emancipation of woman was a thing which Christianity at once and of necessity brought about. In the freedom of the Christian consciousness women at once felt themselves free from everything that was inconsistent with it; and in the mixed marriages which were so frequent in that age, there was abundant opportunity to become conscious of this freedom. Even the apostle Paul allowed that the Christian wife of a mixed marriage had the right of free and independent action in relation to her husband in matters of religion.[2] If this was so, the wife could not fail to become conscious that she was entitled to a freer position in social life generally. The freer conduct which even the women of the Corinthian Church allowed themselves—more particularly if they claimed the same privileges for themselves in the meetings of the Church which the men exercised—shows us how early Christian women came to

[1] Ad Uxorem, ii. 9. The two books Ad Uxorem belong to the pre-Montanist period of Tertullian. Compare Neander, Antignosticus, Bohn, p. 350 *sq.* It is self-evident that such a marriage can only take place between a Christian husband and a Christian wife. Tertullian accordingly argues seriously and powerfully against mixed marriages:—Ad Uxorem, ii. 3: Fideles gentilium matrimonia subeuntes stupri reos esse constat, et arcendos ab omni communicatione fraternitatis,—comp. De Corona, c. 13. The arguments on which Tertullian bases his opinion against second marriage, hard and stern as they are, yet express that genuinely moral spirit in which his view of the nature of Christian marriage was conceived.

[2] 1 Cor. vii. 12, 13. The wife has the same right to ἀφιέναι as the husband: ἡ γυνὴ, ἥτις ἔχει ἄνδρα ἄπιστον—μὴ ἀφιέτω αὐτόν.

feel this consciousness of their freer position. It is true that the apostle Paul felt it to be necessary to restrain their desire for freedom, and to remind them of the duty of subjection to their husbands;[1] yet there can be no doubt that the moral notion of Christian marriage was most essentially determined by the freer position which Christianity gave to women as nothing before could ever have done, in the consciousness of their religious liberty.

If marriage is the basis of household life, the new consecration which Christianity gave to this institution must naturally have acted upon the whole life of the household, penetrating it with a new spirit. But apart from this, the moral influence of Christianity could find no sphere of action more suitable or more intimately corresponding to its own nature than that provided by the life of the household. The repulsion which the Christians felt for the manners or the immorality of heathen life produced the very natural result of directing their gaze from what was without to what was within, and sending them to the inner life of their own community to seek that satisfaction which the public life of the surrounding world was not able to give them. In addition to this, a religion like Christianity, which inculcates turning away from the world and turning into one's own heart, which encourages the practice of earnest self-contemplation and self-knowledge, and regards constant occupation with the most secret matters of a heart directed towards God as the most important duty—such a religion necessarily operated in the direction of awakening a taste for domestic life, the quiet, sacred circle where alone many of those virtues which make the business of the Christian life can be practised and fostered. Here we notice a peculiarly characteristic feature of that social tendency to which Christianity gave an impulse. The predominating tendency of the life of the ancient world was towards the outward, the public, the political. Christianity, on the contrary, impressed on social life the directly opposite bias—to retire into itself, and to give to private and personal

[1] Compare my Beiträge zur Erklärung der Korintherbriefe. Theol. Jahrb. 1852, p. 563 *sq.*

affairs a deep importance such as they could never have attained in the prime and the glory of the old civic life. The decisive change in this direction came, as might have been expected, at the period when Christianity and heathenism were most sharply antithetical and repellent to each other. It is more than a hypothesis if we affirm that the influence exercised by Christianity in the quiet power of its family and wedded life, was the principal agent in bringing about the great change by which the aristocratic and despotic spirit of the ancient world—which regarded the individual as merely a mean for the general ends of the whole—was brought to yield to a more humane and kindly way of thinking, in which the equal rights of all were recognised, and regard paid to the human dignity even of the weakest and the lowest.[1]

In all these particulars that genuinely moral spirit of Christianity declares itself, which is the inmost principle of its historical development. That spirit manifests itself much more characteristically in the homely matters we have been discussing than in that

[1] It is from this point of view that we have to regard the slavery of the ancient world. The mitigation and gradual abolition of slavery, though not a thing unthought of by the humaner minds of antiquity (compare my Abhandlung über Seneca und Paulus in the Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theol., 1858, p. 212 *sq.*, also in the Drei Abhandlungen, No. 3, p. 423 *sq.*), yet dates from the time of Christianity. The apostle Paul, in the conviction that a man could be a good Christian in any rank of life, advises the slave (1 Cor. vii. 21), even if he be able to gain his liberty, rather to remain as he is. In his fundamental Christian view, however, as expressed in Gal. iii. 28, the difference between slave and freeman is made to disappear; and if there was no inner reason for the subsistence of the difference, it was found, sooner or later, to fall away outwardly as well. What a kindly spirit towards slaves breathes in the Epistle to Philemon, where the slave converted to Christianity is sent back to his Christian master as a Christian brother, and with all the sentiments of Christian sympathy. Origen (c. Cels. iii. 54), regards the training of slaves to a freer mind as one of the exercises of humanity with which Christianity is charged, inasmuch as it seeks to heal all reasonable natures with its reasonable doctrines, and to make them the friends of God, the Creator of all. One of the innovations with which the Roman Callistus is charged by his adversary, Hippolytus, is an ordinance by which marriages between slaves and free women were to be allowed and to be recognised as legally valid. Philos. ix. 12. p. 291. Comp. Döllinger, *op. cit.* p. 158 *sq.* According to Möhler, Bruchstücke aus der Geschichte der Aufhebung der Sclaverei (Gesammelte Schriften und Aufsätze, vol. ii. 1840, p. 54 *sq.*), Chrysostom was the first to raise the subject of the emancipation of the slaves in the Christian Church.

feature of the history of early Christianity which is commonly most admired. The latter indeed, if we analyse with some exactness the exaggerated representations of vainglorious writers, or the motives, not always of the purest, from which it proceeded, often proves to be a mere deceptive show. Whatever glories surround the Christian martyr-heroism, the true and solid substance of them is ultimately to be found in that moral earnestness alone, which Christianity awakened in its adherents. By this earnestness it produced much deeper and more permanent effects upon human life, than by anything that remained after the transitory glory of the martyr-crowns. But with regard to our whole subject we are not entitled to dwell only on the bright side which we have before us in the phenomena on which we have been dwelling; there is also a dark side confronting it, and this must be considered as well if we are to have a true and faithful representation of the moral and religious life of the Christians of our period.

Moral qualities and acts are pure and noble in proportion as the religious consciousness from which they set out is free and uncorrupted. What essentially determined the morality of the Christian was that in his religious consciousness he had made himself free from all those elements which in heathen polytheism clouded the moral consciousness and hindered its pure and free development. But in this respect were the Christians really so free in their religious consciousness as the decided antithesis which they presented to heathen polytheism would lead us to believe? True, they did not believe in the existence of the heathen gods, but instead of gods they felt themselves encountered everywhere in the heathen world by demons; and the idea of these demons exercised the widest influence on their lives. The Christian belief in demons engendered a multitude of superstitious ideas and actions, by which the life of the Christians itself received a heathen impress. In every place, and especially where he came in contact with the heathen world, the Christian saw himself surrounded and laid wait for by demons, against whose hostile attacks and snares he could not be too much on his guard. This

produced in his whole bearing a timid anxiety, a preoccupation and disquiet which could not but be very injurious to his moral attitude, and was far from being any great testimony to the firmness and cheerfulness of his moral and religious self-consciousness. And not only so, but in this constant battle with the demons he resorted, since he thought there were no other means of protection against those beings, to practices resting on no moral ground, and in fact belonging to no art but magic. What is it but magic, when the power to drive out demons was ascribed to the mere name of Jesus?[1] With prayer also, although the Christians were well acquainted with its moral and religious efficacy and importance, magical ideas of the same sort were not seldom associated. And what could be more natural, than that, in proportion as the demon-world everywhere made itself felt, human life and the human soul should stand entirely unprotected and open to the influence of higher powers of opposite nature? But the more the centre of gravity of the consciousness comes to be not in the man himself, but outside of him, not in the sensible but in the supersensible world, the more is his moral consciousness deprived of its firm and immanent principle. Nor was the belief in demons less disturbing and disquieting for the Christian consciousness on that side where the demonic in the form of heathenism encountered it in the daily relations of life. In the manifold relations in which the Christian stood to the heathen world, it was hard enough for him to avoid every occasion through which his conscience might become burdened with the guilt of favouring polytheism. But how many collisions were certain to arise when the further step was taken that every contact with heathenism was counted as a demonic pollution, and how hard was it to draw the line between what was allowed and what was interdicted, when the life of the Christians was so interwoven with that of the heathens that the question of conscience might easily become a question of life or death.

[1] As even by Origen, contra Cels. i. 25. Τῆς δ' ὁμοίας ἔχεται περὶ ὀνομάτων φιλοσοφίας καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος Ἰησοῦς, οὗ τὸ ὄνομα μυρίους ἤδη ἐναργῶς ἑώραται δαίμονας ἐξελάσαν ψυχῶν καὶ σωμάτων, ἐνεργῆσαν εἰς ἐκείνους ἀφ' ὧν ἀπηλάθησαν.

Tertullian declares that not only he is an idolater who strews incense to the gods, or sacrifices or performs any other act directly connected with the heathen cultus; but that all acts, trades, and businesses, which contribute in any way to the erection or adornment of idols, are to be placed under the same category of idolatry. What then were those to do who made their living by such an occupation? To this question Tertullian gives the stern reply, that faith fears not hunger, but knows that for God's sake it must despise hunger, as well as all other modes of death. The apostles also gave up their trades and occupations for the call of the Lord, and none of those whom the Lord called to himself said, I know not whereby I am to live.[1] This moral rigorism was based for the most part on the false view of the heathen gods, as wicked demons hostile to God. But that simply shows us how limited and one-sided the moral action must have been which proceeded from such views; and since it was surely impossible that everything alike could be regarded as a furthering of heathen idolatry, how constantly the doubt must have obtruded itself whether the action thus enjoined, and involving so great a sacrifice, had so strong a claim upon the moral consciousness as was supposed. As against such scruples Tertullian reminds his readers that the display and luxury of the age provided occupation for the arts even more than its superstition;[2] but what was there to prevent the same rigorism from extending yet further, since there could everywhere be found in one way or another, some indirect reference to heathen idolatry and the pompa diaboli? Tertullian even went so far as to declare the office of the Ludimagistri and the other professores literarum to be incompatible with Christianity; they also stand in the most manifold relation to idolatry: they have to describe the heathen gods, and to explain their names, genealogies, the fables about them, and all that belongs to their honour and personal distinction. Here he cannot help noticing the objection that if it is wrong to teach such things, it must be wrong to learn them as well, and that in this case the Christians would be

[1] De Idolol. c. 11 *sq.* [2] *Op. cit.* cap. 8.

deprived of the means of general culture, which is indispensable to them even with a view to religion. The only reply he has to give to this is that there is nevertheless a difference between teaching and learning, and that the compulsion to take part in heathen idolatry is not nearly so great in the case of the pupils as in that of the teachers.[1] But this only shows us to what perpetual collisions such a limited mode of view could not fail to give rise, and that there was ultimately no way of dealing with these collisions, but that of petty evasions. In the same category we have to place all those cases in which the Christians came in conflict with the heathen state. How could the Christian fill any office of the magistracy, if heathen usages and insignia were connected with it? how could he undertake military service if he had to swear the heathen oath of the standards? how could he obey the emperor, if the emperor stood at the head of a heathen state? Tertullian was nothing more than logical, when to the first two of these questions he returned a stern uncompromising negative,[2] but what course was to be followed in answering the third? The Christians honoured the emperor, and showed him due obedience, recognising it as their duty not only to give to God the things that are God's, but also to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Indeed they even saw in the emperor, the regent placed by God at the summit of the empire which was to subsist to the end of the world, the man who stood nearest to God.[3] But if the whole

[1] Cap. 10. The question, afterwards so frequently discussed, of the secularia studia, is here spoken of for the first time. The same question, but in another sense, is discussed by Clement of Alexandria, Strom. i. 5 *sq.*, with reference to the *παιδεία κοσμική* or the *προπαιδεία ἑλληνική*.

[2] *Op. cit.* cap. 18 *sq.* Daemonia sunt magistratus seculi hujus, unius collegii insignia fasces et purpuras gestant (dignitates et potestates).—Non convenit sacramento divino et humano, signo Christi et signo diaboli, castris lucis et castris tenebrarum; non potest una anima duobus deberi, Deo et Caesari. The same question is answered by Origen, c. Celsum, viii. 73 *sq.*; but he does not enter into the real point involved in it.

[3] Tert. ad Scap. c. 2. Christianus nullius est hostis, nedum imperatoris, quem sciens a Deo suo constitui necesse est ut et ipsum diligat et revereatur et honoret, et salvum velit cum toto Romano imperio, quousque seculum stabit, tamdiu enim stabit. Colimus ergo et imperatorem sic, quomodo et nobis licet et ipsi expedit, ut hominem a Deo secundum et quidquid est a Deo consecutum, solo Deo

constitution of the state was founded on the worship of demons, and the head of the state was himself the most powerful supporter and the greatest furtherer of this cultus, the Christian view could as easily see in him the vicegerent of the devil, as the regent appointed by God.[1] It is true the Christians felt it necessary to make their obedience to the magistrate dependent on the condition that he did not make a duty to them of anything unchristian. But how soon would the limit of their obedience be reached, if the emperor himself should require of them anything heathen or demonic, and in such a case what choice remained to them, but either to injure their consciences as Christians, or to go out of a world, in which there was no practical possibility of the exercise of Christian virtue except on the condition of a temporary immolation of the moral subject?[2] A moral disposition which decides without hesitation for the latter alternative is highly to be esteemed from the subjective point of view; but within what narrow limits is a course of moral action confined which is determined by ideas belonging to such a limited view of things and standing in so fortuitous a connection with Christianity? For considering the very idea which did more than any other to bring the Christians into such strained relations with the Roman State, how little inner justification does it find in the essence of Christianity itself?

minorem. Hoc et ipse volet. Sic enim omnibus major est, dum solo vero Deo minor est: sic et ipsis Diis major est, dum et ipsi in potestate sunt ejus.

[1] In the Apocalypse Nero as Antichrist was this. There could be no greater contrast than that which obtains on this point between the Apocalypse and the Epistle to the Romans, xiii. 1 *sq.* It is with reference to the same Nero, in whose person the apocalyptic writer sees the embodiment of Antichrist, that the Apostle speaks of the Christian duty of obedience to the magistrate; and where the former writer exhorts to the most determined resistance to the adversary, who is the enemy of God and is contending with the Lamb, the dictum of the latter is, ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκεν, etc. The dilemma which could not but arise for the early Christians from this difference between the Pauline and the Johannine injunction, has been solved by time in the simple discovery that Nero was not the Antichrist the Apocalypse announced that he was. But what a stumbling-block must it have been for the conscience of that age!

[2] De Idolol. cap. 24. Nemo dicat: quis tam tuto praecavebit? exeundum de seculo erit. Quasi non tanti sit exire, quam idololatrem in seculo stare!

The moral and religious business of life for the Christian was from the first defined (Eph. vi. 12) in this way, that the Christian had to fight not only with flesh and blood, but also with the powers of darkness. How the Christian bore himself as against the demons and demonic heathenism, we see from the traits to which we have drawn attention as illustrating the character of the Christian morality. But in his own flesh also the Christian saw himself placed in the sphere of an opposition by which his moral view of life and his moral action were determined in a peculiar way. The dualism of flesh and spirit, and in particular the second member of this antithesis, the flesh, occupied a most important place in the whole mode of view of the Christians. On the one side the flesh was precious and dear to them, and one of the principal distinctions between the Christian and the heathen view of the world and of life was with regard to it. Hence Celsus contemptuously called the Christians a race "clinging to the body," and in fact they were never able to give up the flesh, even though there dwelt in it the most dangerous enemy with whom they had to contend. They were under the necessity of seeking a reconciliation with the flesh in spite of these conflicts, since without the flesh there could be no resurrection, and without a resurrection there could be no enjoyment of all those goods and pleasures which the future world, the true home of the Christian, was to afford. In no other period of the Christian Church was so great stress laid on the doctrine of the resurrection against heathen and Gnostic adversaries, as in the first age. Several of the most notable of the Fathers, as especially Athenagoras and Tertullian, made it the subject of special discussion, and sought to bring out the importance and the truth of the doctrine, and to show that the body as well as the spirit was an essential element of the nature which God created, and of the human personality, so that it was impossible not to believe that the divine justice and mercy would extend to it also. And it was not only for the future world that the body had so great importance; in the present world as well it was necessary that it should, as if it were a separate subject, existing for itself, render its co-operation

throughout all the stages of the Christian economy, up to the attainment of the Christian salvation; its co-operation was so essential that salvation could not be obtained apart from its help, and it would receive in the future world, simply as its wages, what it had earned in the present.[1] This specifically Christian view of the flesh, however, is only one side of the way in which it is regarded. On the other side that dualism of spirit and matter, which was so intimately connected with the notions of antiquity, operated upon the Christian view of life in such a way as to make it appear that the highest requirement known to the Christian life as a business of moral progress was to flee from the body or to mortify the flesh. Christian morality thus acquired an essentially ascetic character, which however was simply the Christian modification of the tendency of mind prevailing generally in that age, to look upon philosophy on the side of its practical requirement as an ἄσκησις, a view which made philosophy appear to stand in an inner connection with Christianity. The task of asceticism is in general both to prevent the excess of the sensual lusts, and to set a limit to those material wants which are essentially necessary, by adopting a mode of life in which they are restricted to the smallest possible measure of the satisfaction they crave. And accordingly the frequent exercise of fasting was from the first a leading feature of Christian asceticism, the Christian character of these fasts appearing mainly in the fact of their being connected with the days and hours which were sacred to the memory of the passion and death of the Redeemer. These exercises, however, which were observed with more or less strictness, and in a freer or more precise form, do not present any remarkable feature though they were sometimes marked by special acts of abstinence. A much

[1] Comp. Tert. de resurr. carnis, c. 8. Videamus,—quanta huic substantiae frivolae ac sordidae apud Deum praerogativa sit—adeo caro salutis est cardo. De qua cum anima Deo allegitur, ipsa est, quae efficit, ut anima allegi possit. Scilicet caro abluitur, ut anima emaculetur; caro unguitur, ut anima consecretur; caro signatur, ut et anima muniatur; caro manus impositione adumbratur, ut et anima spiritu illuminetur; caro corpore et sanguine Christi vescitur, ut et anima de Deo saginetur. Non possunt ergo seperari in mercede, quas opera conjungit.

more important question is, What views were held by the Christians of the earliest period on marriage and celibacy? The phenomena bearing on this subject will give us more than anything else the standard by which to judge of the ascetic character of this period.

At no other time has the question of marriage ever been so much discussed, or have such widely divergent views been put forth on the subject.[1] On the dualistic view of the world, which

[1] On the occasion which leads the Apostle Paul to speak of marriage in 1 Cor. cap. vii., and on his view of marriage, compare my Beiträge zur Erklärung der Korintherbriefe, Theol. Jahrb. 1852, p. 1 *sq.* I can only repeat shortly here what I have there set forth in more detail. In his view of marriage the Apostle is still at that point of transition where the Christian moral view of the world has yet to disengage itself from the view of antiquity, which is based on the antithesis of matter and spirit. Not only does the Apostle accord the preference to celibacy viewed in itself, and allow marriage merely in order to prevent the greater evil of πορνεία,—he goes so far as to declare that it is best that those who are not yet married remain as they are. This is manifestly because he sees the catastrophe of the world, advancing to its dissolution, immediately impending, vii. 26, 29, 31. Accordingly it appears to him that at a time when everything is already shaking, changing, and passing away, it is scarcely worth the trouble to undertake a change of one's outward circumstances. In making the change a man can reckon on no permanency, and is only preparing care and trouble for himself, vv. 26, 28. Here it is very clear how such a standpoint bore upon the moral judgment to be formed on such relations of social life as marriage. From the point of the world's history at which we stand we cannot but see that from the beginning Christianity was destined to enter into all those relations in which it realises itself and has now set forth into the full reality of things seen the essential contents of its nature. What we thus observe we take to be the moral task of Christianity. Our whole view of its absolute value is essentially dependent on our observation of all that it has come to be to humanity in moral respects in the course of its historical development. The more profoundly and the more many-sidedly we see all the relations of moral and social life to be penetrated by it, the more certainly has the idea of its nature realised itself in that process. Thus should we find a standpoint from which the course of development which Christianity has followed lies beyond the sphere of vision, and not only so, but the very idea of such a development is cut off by the belief that the end of its course in time is at the door, when it is in truth only about to begin; we shall see it to be very natural that from such a point of view the moral task of Christianity should be less thought of, and those very relations of life which we cannot but regard as peculiarly constituting the moral sphere of Christianity, appear more or less indifferent. As with the Apostle's view of marriage, so with his view of slavery. He exhorts the slave rather to continue a slave because he holds it as a general opinion that all should remain in those circumstances in which they, as Christians, are, vv. 17, 20, 24. And yet we cannot but judge that the abolition of slavery is a requirement of the moral consciousness which agrees

in this subject showed itself to have such considerable influence, there could be no explanation of the intercourse of the sexes that did not go back to the antithesis of the two principles, spirit and matter. When such principles formed the background, every view on marriage was of great importance; especially, if this was the case, would the attention of the Gnostics be directed to the question; and it is necessary to have the principles of the Gnostics before our eyes if we are to understand the different ideas about marriage aright. Gnostics like Valentine and Basilides, who conceived a less abrupt antithesis between spirit and matter, did not simply reject marriage. In fact the former thought of the aeons of the spirit-world as pairs joined in marriage; while with the latter ethical considerations stood too high to admit of being seriously limited by his Gnostic dualism. Those Gnostics, however, whose views and principles were most extreme, were correctly divided even by Clement of Alexandria[2] into two classes. The first class he said allowed promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, while the other required in an exaggerated way a continence hostile to God. Divergent as these two views are, both spring from the same dualism. If the relation between spirit and matter is conceived of dualistically, to such an extent that the antithesis between the two can never yield and allow them to be united in an inner harmonious unity, then spirit must be filled with a constant endeavour to come to such an adjustment with matter as is possible. Now this may be brought about in two ways. Either spirit may seek completely to sever the bond which connects it with matter, or in its co-existence along with matter, it may

with the spirit of Christianity. Thus although the Apostle's views on marriage and on slavery were limited by the circumstances of the time he lived in, yet we see the universality of the Christian principle in the fact that in the whole history of mankind there has been no advance of moral development that was not essentially founded in Christianity, and was not brought about, without any revolutionary pressure, by its quietly working influence.

[1] In the third book of the Stromata, where he treats of the doctrine of marriage at great length, c. 5:—*φέρε εἰς δύο διελόντες πράγματα ἁπάσας τὰς αἱρέσεις ἀποκρινώμεθα αὐτοῖς. ἢ γάρ τοι ἀδιαφόρως ζῆν διδάσκουσιν, ἢ τὸ ὑπέρτονον ἄγουσαι, ἐγκράτειαν διὰ δυσσεβείας καὶ φιλαπεχθημοσύνης καταγγέλλουσι.*

regard all that takes place in it and by means of it, *i.e.* all the works of the flesh, as a thing entirely indifferent, by which the being of the spirit is not touched at all. On the latter side stood those who followed the principle which is ascribed to the Nicolaitans: ὅτε παραχρήσασθαι τῇ σαρκὶ δεῖ, that one must let the flesh have free course, in order that being left to itself it may wear out and exhaust itself. Fleshly lust was to have its natural course, in which it was not to be restricted.[1] Accordingly the Nicolaitans are said (as is said of other Gnostic sects as well), to have practised the most shameless licentiousness.[2] The strictest dualists being also the most pronounced opponents of Judaism, there were some among them who were carried so far by their antinomianism as to become opponents and contemners of the moral law. Such were those whose tendency was indicated by the Fathers in the term Antitactae. They said that the Creator of the universe was their natural father, and that everything that he had made was good, but that one of those who, derived their origin from him had sown tares, and thereby engendered the nature of evil, in which he entangled us all, by making us opposed to the father. "Therefore," they said, "we also oppose him, in order to avenge the Father, by acting contrary to the will of the second. If he said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, we say, we commit adultery, in order to make his law void."[3] From this antinomianism where everything positive is rejected, it is a small step to that naturalism and communism which completely does away with the distinction of the natural and the moral. This was taught by Carpocrates and his son Epiphanes, who sought a foundation for it on principle in the idea of justice, as a new theory of social life. Epiphanes wrote a book on justice, in which he developed his idea as follows:—The justice of God is community with equality. Heaven is stretched out equally in every direction, and encompasses the earth round about. Night shows all her stars alike, and the author of

[1] Clem. Strom. iii. 5; cp. ii. 20.

[2] There was no particular sect of Nicolaitans; the name was taken from the Apocalypse, ii. 6, to serve as a general designation of Gentile-Christian libertines.

[3] Clem. *loc. cit.* cap. 4.

day, the father of light, Helios, God has poured out from above in equal measure for all who can see. They all see in common, since there is no difference between rich and poor, people and prince, rational and irrational, man and woman, freeman and slave. Nor is it otherwise among the beings without reason. As he communicates himself from above to all living beings, to the good and to the bad, he confirms his justice by this, that no one can have more or can take away from his neighbour so as to have the light doubled for himself. The sun causes common nourishment to grow for all creatures, and gives the same justice to all. All creatures alike are generated in the way of community according to their species, and there is no written law of generation; it would have been abrogated long ago. The same community of the sexes is natural to them all, as the Creator and Father of all, the same just lawgiver, has given to all the same eye for seeing, without making a distinction between the male and the female, between the rational and that which is without reason, or in a word, between one thing and another. To this natural community he opposed the laws as a hostile power. The laws, which cannot hold the ignorance of men in their discipline, taught men to act against the laws. It was the property of the laws which cut and gnawed through the community of the divine law. To this refers the word of the apostle: "By the law I knew sin." The difference between *meum* and *tuum* came in through the laws, and what is common can no longer be enjoyed in common, neither the earth nor its possessions, nor even marriage. The Creator made vines common for all; they refuse neither a sparrow nor a thief; and the same is the case with corn and other fruits. The violation of community, however, created the thief of flocks and fruits. While God created all things common for man, and joined the female and the male together in community, and paired all creations in the same way, he thereby manifested justice, community with equality. But those who were born in this way denied the community by which they came into being, and now one man is to have one woman, when all can take part, as is the case with the other animals.

The stronger sexual desire was implanted in the males for the preservation of the species, and neither law nor custom, nor anything else whatever, can do away with it; it is God's ordinance.[1] While this class of heretics thus set in the place of marriage the most promiscuous sexual intercourse, thus marking the greatest practical aberration made by Gnosticism in its extreme tendency in this direction, those Gnostics who stood on the opposite side would know nothing of marriage or of the intercourse of the sexes. In fact, they made a principle of entirely severing the bond which connects man with the physical material world. While the former school reduced marriage, under the name of a general community, or of freedom and equality, practically to a *πορνεία*, the other school regarded it as simply a *πορνεία*, and so rejected it with all possible hatred and abhorrence. We refer to those who, as Clement describes them,[2] under the fair name of continence, acted impiously against the creation and the holy Creator of the world, and God, the one ruler of all; and rejected marriage and the generation of children, because, they said, it was not right to bring others into the world who would be unhappy and to provide new nourishment for death. To this class belonged Saturninus, who expressly declared marriage and the begetting of children to be a work of the devil;[3] and other Gnostics, especially those of Syria, had such a view of matter that they must have held opinions contrary to marriage on similar grounds. But it was by the Marcionites, more than any others, that this view of marriage was represented. They hold, Clement says,[4] that nature is evil, because it arose out of matter which is evil, and was created by the just Creator of the world. In order, then, not to populate the world which is made by the Creator, they require that people should refrain from marriage. They resist their Creator and hasten to the Good, who has called them, but not to him who, as they say, is of quite a different disposition. As they do not wish to leave

[1] Clement, *op. cit.* cap. 2. [2] *Op. cit.* cap. 6.

[3] Epiphanius, Haer. xxiii. 2. Philos. vii. 28, p. 245.

[4] *Op. cit.* cap. 3. Compare what Tertullian says of Marcion as the detestator nuptiarum, Chr. Gnosis, p. 268 *sq.*

anything belonging to them behind them here, they are continent, not from free determination, but from hostility to the Creator of the world, being unwilling to use those things which he has created. But while they thus with impious mind wage war against God, and keep far from them the thoughts which are according to nature, and despise the longsuffering and the goodness of God, they make use, even if they will not marry, of the food which is created, and inhale the air of the Creator, since they are his creatures and live in his world. And while they say that they proclaim an entirely new knowledge as the Gospel, they ought to be thankful to the Lord of the world for this, that the Gospel has been announced to them here. So great, as Clement remarks, are the contradictions in which this dualism was involved. But even this shows us how mighty an influence that dualism still exercised, and how profoundly it modified opinion even where the freer spirit of Christianity might have been expected to elevate the Christian consciousness long before this above the abstract antithesis of spirit and matter. Yet it is just this profound interpenetration of the heathen and the Christian views of the world which constitutes the essence of Gnosticism, and not without manifold struggle and conflict could principles so heterogeneous be disengaged from each other and take up their proper relations to each other. Hence, even in individuals in whom the Christian principle had already struck deep root, the Gnostic element again and again gained the ascendency. This we see in a notable manner in the case of Tatian, a man who held a position very close to that of Justin Martyr in the series of the apologists, and yet took up a line in relation to Christian asceticism which justifies us in reckoning him among the Gnostics. He wrote a work on Christian perfection,[1] in which he appears to have treated specially of the question of marriage. In the passage 1 Cor. vii. 5, he asserted that the marriage the apostle speaks of is only the spiritual union of the husband and wife in prayer, and he declares matrimonial coition to be a communion of corruption which puts an end to prayer. The words

[1] Περὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν σωτῆρα καταρτισμοῦ. Clem. Strom. iii. 12.

of the apostle are to be understood, not as conceding, but as deterring: one should not, the Apostle says, serve two masters; if the husband and wife are united and agree in prayer, they serve God; but if not, they serve incontinence, fornication, and the devil. Tatian is therefore regarded as the founder of the Encratites, who, following the precedent of Saturninus and Marcion, set up the principle of celibacy, and held it to be a reproach to the first pair that they joined together for sexual intercourse and the begetting of children: he is charged with the blasphemy of having denied salvation to the first parents of mankind.[1] In genuine dualistic fashion he appears to have drawn a distinction between the law and the Gospel, that if the God of the law allowed not only polygamy, but even marriage, he must have been quite a different being from the God of the Gospel. In support of his view of marriage he no doubt appealed—in fact the title of his work suggests that he appealed—chiefly to the life of the Redeemer himself. Clement couples with Tatian an adherent of the Valentinian school, Julius Cassian, said to be the founder of the Docetae. He devoted a work to the subject of continence or eunuchism in which he contended that it was not legitimate to infer from the sexual form of men and women that God intended them for sexual intercourse. If this organisation of human nature were from the God to whom we seek to come, he would not have said that eunuchs are blessed, nor would the prophet have said that they were no dry tree (Isa. lvi. 3). Otherwise we should be forced to blame the Redeemer that he re-formed us and delivered us from error and the communion of the sexual organs. For this Cassian appealed to a saying of the Lord contained in the Gospel of the Egyptians: to the question of Salome, when that which she was asking should be known, he answered, "When you shall have trodden under foot the garment of shame, and the two are one, and in the unity of the male and female there shall be neither male nor female."[2]

The absolute rejection of marriage is the heretical extreme. Within the Christian Church it was desired to avoid the extreme,

[1] Eusebius, E. H. iv. 28 *sq.*

[2] Clem. *op. cit.* cap. 13.

but, if that were avoided, still to hold fast essentially the same view. No one remained nearer to this view than Tertullian. It is true that, as a Montanist, he only represents one particular tendency of Christian thought and custom, but even before his Montanist period, he stood very near to the Montanist way of thinking, and this is but one proof the more of the many various modifications and degrees which found a place under one and the same fundamental view. The complete continence and celibacy which the Gnostics and Encratites required became an object of Christian ascetic endeavour, but with this difference, that marriage was not called in question; allowing marriage, it was sought to approach as nearly as possible to the same standard of perfection. What Tertullian fought for with all the acuteness of his sophistical dialectic and all the fire of his rhetoric, was monogamy.[1] There can be only one marriage; what goes beyond this, second marriage, falls under that abhorrence of πορνεία, with which the Gnostics and Encratites rejected marriage, as such. In the accursed Lamech, the first who had two wives, second marriage had a fitting place as the second crime after murder. He declared that it was not a double marriage, for at the root of the matter it made no difference whether a man had two wives one after the other or both at once, but simply adultery. A wife who had lost her husband, if she had lived at variance with him, must be the more bound to one with whom she had still a suit before God. If she had lived in peace with him, then also she must abide with him from whom she would not have wished to be separated: she must pray continually for his soul, and sacrifice on the anniversaries of his departure, and hope to be united with him again at the resurrection. In this case, if she should marry again, she will have the first man in her spirit and the second in the flesh, and this is adultery if a woman divide her consciousness between two men.[2] Now, the remarkable point is, that the arguments Tertullian uses to contend

[1] Cp. Hauber, Tertullian's Kampf gegen die zweite Ehe. Ein Beitrag zur christlichen Sittengeschichte. Theol. Stud. und Krit. 1845, p. 607 *sq.*

[2] De Monog. cap. 4, 10.

against second marriage apply to the first marriage equally well. He sees in marriage nothing but the sensual act in which the flesh satisfies its burning appetite. It is only of the second marriage, it is true, that he directly says it is a species stupri. When Paul says that married people seek to please one another, he refers to sensual desire, to that out of which fornication arises; he who looks on a woman with a view to marriage, looks on her with a view to the commission of a stuprum. This naturally applies to marriage in general; it is only the laws, as Tertullian himself says, that make a difference between matrimonium and stuprum, on account of what is prohibited, not on account of the nature of the thing itself.[1] He himself allows that his argument is destructive of marriage in general, but he considers that there is no wrong done in this, because marriage is essentially the same thing as stuprum. The best of all therefore is the original holiness which has nothing in common with stuprum. And if this motive of continence applies to marriage in general, how much more strongly does it speak against second marriage? A single marriage is an indulgence on God's part, for which we must be thankful; but we must not go beyond it by abuse, so that we may not sink deeper and deeper below the first stage, from which even marriage is a declension, to the second.[2] Especially in his work on monogamy does Tertullian, writing as a champion of Montanism, contend zealously against second marriage. But

[1] De exhort. castitatis, c. 9: Matrimonium et stuprum commixtio carnis. De monog. c. 15: Quid est enim adulterium, quam matrimonium illicitum?

[2] De exhort. cast. cap. 9. Tertullian distinguishes the following kinds and stages of virginity, cap. 1; Prima species est virginitas a nativitate: secunda virginitas a secunda nativitate, id est a lavacro, quae aut in matrimonio purificat ex compacto, aut in viduitate perseverat ex arbitrio: tertius gradus superest monogamiae, cum post matrimonium unum interceptum exinde sexui renuntiatur. Prima virginitas felicitatis est, non nosse in totum, a quo postea optabis liberari. Secunda virtutis est, contemnere cujus vim optime noris. Reliqua species hactenus nubendi (*i.e.* never again), post matrimonium morte disjunctum praeter virtutis etiam modestiae laus est. Ad Ux. i. 8; he places the state of widowhood at a higher stage of merit than virginity, inasmuch as—facile est, non appetere, quod nescias, et aversari, quod desideres nunquam. Gloriosior continentia, quae jus suum sentit, quae, quid viderit, novit.

on this point the Montanist view was not essentially different from the general Christian view; it was the exaggeration of the Montanists, with the opposition which it called forth, that removed the prejudice against second marriage which had till then prevailed —but up to that time it was generally disapproved and held to be at the best a less offensive adultery.[1] This view of second marriage, however, must, while it prevailed, have reacted upon the view taken of the first, and made it also to appear as only the lesser evil compared with *πορνεία*. It thus gives us a most interesting insight into the character of the moral and ascetic spirit of that age. In Tertullian himself, more than in any other writer, we notice how undeveloped the idea of morality still was. A doctrine of morals which forbids a practice and then allows it again, and which seems to set up its principles and commands in the strictest and most universal way, only to introduce an indulgence of them afterwards, has essentially a very ambiguous character. And what is yet more remarkable is that in the very midst of the exhortations to rule and mortify the sensual desires, the language of sensuality is heard, and with what appears to be the most earnest zeal for Christian asceticism there is mixed a most carnal inclination. In what sensual expressions and images does Tertullian speak of marriage; in all that he says on the first and the second marriage how clearly do we see the most burning desire for that very thing, against which he is contending as a purely material impulse! How far does he seem to be, in his Montanist way of thinking, from the whole higher moral notion of marriage, when he places the whole essence of marriage, that in which he says it consists, in the entirely sensual act of carnal intercourse.[2] In this way the first marriage appears, when it is insisted so strongly that that is to be

[1] Compare Athenag., Leg. cap. 33. *ὁ δεύτερος (γάμος) εὐπρεπὴς ἐστι μοιχεία.* He who withraws from his first wife, even if she is dead, is in secret an adulterer; he goes beyond the hand of God and severs the band of sexual intercourse which makes of two one flesh. From the monarchical view which lies at the basis of the Clementine Homilies, as well as from the abhorrence of *πορνεία*, expressed in that work, we infer that it can have allowed one marriage only. Compare Die christliche Gnosis p. 374 *sq.*, 400.

[2] Nuptiae ipsae ex eo constant, quod est stuprum. De exhort. cast. cap. 9.

the limit, as being a mere compromise with sensuality. A man is not to go further, to a second marriage, because he has no confidence in his own moral power and cannot expect to get the better of sensual lust in any other way than by the outward removal of the object to which it refers. Thus what is generally taken to be moral rigorism, it is true, but also certainly a most estimable moral earnestness, is in truth at the same time the confession of a lack of moral power. This appears with equal plainness in Tertullian's zeal in insisting on the veiling of virgins. Virgins must be veiled, he requires, as soon as the body is developed and the sexual consciousness has awakened; from this time forward they are not virgins but women, and in accordance with the Apostle's command they must be veiled.[1] What notions of modesty and holiness must we suppose to have actuated this zealot for discipline and the sense of shame, when we find him directly stating, as a thing that was self-understood, that holy men and virgins could not look at each other without blushing, could not meet one another openly without feeling sexually excited![2] A wall of separation must therefore be erected between the two; but, this being done, chastity is sufficiently protected behind this rampart, and the inner desire may be simply let alone.[3] Here we have again that external morality, where moral requirements ask for nothing more than the drawing of an outward line of separation, by which the moral and the immoral are to be distinguished. Morality is not here morality of disposition, but a certain outward behaviour, negative or positive, by which one satisfies a certain requirement

[1] De vel. virg. cap. 12. Agnosce et mulierem, agnosce et nuptam de testimoniis et corporis et spiritus, quae patitur et in conscientia et in carne. Hae sunt tabellae priores naturalium sponsarum et nuptiarum. Impone velamen extrinsecus habenti tegumen intrinsecus. Tegantur etiam superiora, cujus inferiora nuda non sunt.

[2] *Op. cit.* c. 2. Ejusdem libidinis est, videri et videre. Tam sancti viri est, subfundi, si virginem viderit, quam sanctae virginis, si a viro visa sit. Thus we see the strength of the sexual impulses in the fire of the African nature of a Tertullian as well as of an Augustine.

[3] C. 15. Vera et tota et pura virginitas nihil magis timet, quam semet ipsam —confugit ad velamen capitis quasi ad galeam, quasi ad clypeum, qui bonum suum protegat adversus ictus tentationum, adversus jacula scandalorum, etc.

which is set up as the highest norm. Thus there are actions and states which as such are counted moral; chastity does not consist in the chaste mind of the married persons, the truly chaste are the virgines and the spadones, and they alone, who refrain entirely from a thing which even in the legal form of marriage cannot take place without reducing the married persons to a secondary stage of morality. Thus even at this period the highest value is attached to the life of celibacy; it is preferred to married life because it is held to be the surest and most immediate way to attain to God.[1] Yet it is always true, that where sensual desire is not conquered inwardly, but only warded off outwardly, the enemy, who is thought to have been conquered, again and again lifts himself up, and appears only in another form to assert his old right; and so it was here. Those virgins, who appeared to have for ever renounced marriage and every enjoyment of wedded life, yet had a desire to marry and live in wedded intercourse. If earthly marriage had no charm for them, their desire was but the stronger to be brides of heaven, nuptae Deo or Christo. This Deo or Christo nubere is a very current idea even at the time we are speaking of, and the pious fancy of an age fanatically bent on celibacy, busied itself largely in decking out the heavenly marriage with everything that could compensate for those pleasures of the earthly marriage which had not been enjoyed.[2] And the

[1] Athenagoras, Leg. c. 33. *εὕροις δ' ἂν πολλοὺς τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν, καὶ ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας, καταγηράσκοντας ἀγάμους, ἐλπίδι τοῦ μᾶλλον συνέσεσθαι τῷ Θεῷ.—τὸ ἐν παρθενίᾳ καὶ ἐν εὐνουχίᾳ μεῖναι μᾶλλον παρίστησι τῷ Θεῷ.* Compare Tert. ad Ux. i. 6. Quot enim sunt, qui statim a lavacro carnem suam obsignant? quot item, qui consensu pari inter se matrimonii debitum tollunt, voluntarii spadones pro cupiditate regni coelestis? Comp. de cultu fem. ii. 10.

[2] Tert. ad Ux. i. 4. Malunt enim Deo nubere, Deo speciosae, Deo sunt puellae. Cum illo vivunt, cum illo sermocinantur, illum diebus et noctibus tractant, orationes suas velut dotes domino adsignant, ab eodem dignationem velut munera dotalia, quotiescunque desiderant, consequuntur. Sic aeternum sibi donum domini occupaverunt, ac jam in terris non nubendo de familia angelica deputantur. Talium exemplis feminarum,—Tertullian addresses his wife—ad aemulationem te continentiae exercens spiritali affectione carnalem illam concupiscentiam humabis, temporalia et volatica desideria formae vel aetatis immortalium bonorum compensatione delendo. Comp. De exhort. cast. c. 13; De vel. virg. c. 16: Mentire aliquid ex his, quae intus sunt (by veiling her head the virgin gives herself out

sensual interest thrust itself into the exercises of asceticism in a yet more striking form. At the time of Cyprian it had become not uncommon for those who devoted themselves to the ascetic life, and who thought that by exciting the sensual impulse it could be the more effectively subdued, to live together in a sexual familiarity which at the same time was only to have the character of a spiritual intercourse.[1] It was especially the members of the clergy who exposed their morality to this dangerous test.

The dualistic view of the world which entered so deeply into Christianity held that evil consisted simply in the uncleanness of matter, and thus led to the highest requirement of morality being made to consist in the principle that whatever defiles the spirit by contact with matter must be separated and eliminated from the life of the spirit. According to this view, marriage, inasmuch as it belongs to the material and carnal life, was necessarily regarded as objectionable. But on the other side, spirit and matter, or spirit and flesh, are so intimately connected, and are so essentially in each other that even the strictest dualism cannot put asunder what God has joined together. Thus, however strictly the antithesis was held as an abstract general principle, yet it was necessary to relax it for the ends of practical life; and there was no other way to unite the two positions than that the one was allowed and the other not excluded; and definite lines of demarca-

to be, what in herself, inwardly, in her consciousness, she is not, a mulier) ut soli Deo exhibeas veritatem. Quamquam non mentiris nuptam. Nupsisti enim Christo, illi tradidisti carnem tuam, illi sponsasti maturitatem tuam. Incede secundum sponsi tui voluntatem. Christus est, qui et alienas sponsas et maritatas velari jubet, utique multo magis suas.

[1] Virgins of this kind were called *συνείσακτοι*; Eusebius, Ec. Hist. vii. 30. *συνείσακτοι γυναῖκες, ὡς Ἀντιοχεῖς ὀνομάζουσι.* From Cyprian, Epist. 61, we see in how unchaste and shameless a way this sort of asceticism was carried on. We hear of virgins who themselves acknowledged, se cum viris dormisse, namely with a deacon, but asserted se integras esse. Cyprian denounces the practice: quid Christus et dominus et judex noster cum virginem sibi dicatam et sanctitati suae destinatam jacere cum altero cernit, quam indignatur et irascitur?—Et cum omnes omnino disciplinam tenere oporteat, multo magis praepositos et diaconos curare hoc fas est.—Quomodo enim possunt integritati et continentiae praeesse, si ex ipsis incipiant corruptelae et vitiorum magisteria procedere? This unchaste practice continued afterwards, as we see from the prohibitions of it.

tion thus required to be drawn, within which the one principle or the other was to find its application. Here we have the basis of the distinction so important for the history of Christian ethics, between a higher and a lower morality, also of the principle, which arrived at practical importance chiefly in connection with the question of marriage, that even if one renounces the attempt to accomplish the highest moral task, there is yet a sphere of life in which he is moral enough to satisfy the demands of Christian morality. And as the practice of the Christian life, from the very nature of the case, gradually became laxer, that sphere in consequence grew wider, in which a man was not to strive after the highest absolute perfection, but limited his efforts to the minor, subordinate standard. At the beginning even marriage appeared to be only a thing conceded; but in the sequel the prejudice disappeared, not only against the first marriage, but even against the second and succeeding ones.[1] And not only so, but it was thought possible to reconcile the two tendencies, the stricter and the laxer, by the simple expedient of allowing them to exist side by side, and distinguishing two classes, who, though the task of their lives was different, were yet equally justified to the moral judgment. And if in the sphere of morals there had thus been formed, even at this period, a moral aristocracy, what was more natural than that it should take up the closest relation, as being of equal birth, with

[1] Even the Shepherd of Hermas allowed a second marriage, Mand. iv. 4. Qui (a second time) nubit, non peccat, but with this condition: si per se manserit, magnum sibi conquirit honorem apud dominum. For the same reason, however, Tertullian inveighs against the apocryphus pastor moechorum and his scriptura, quae sola moechos amat, and is counted ab omni concilio ecclesiarum inter apocrypha et falsa, adultera et ipsa et inde patrona sociorum. De Pudic. c. 10. 20. Another utterance of Tertullian, found in the same connection in a passage very characteristic of his rigorism, applies to Hermas: Age tu funambule pudicitiae et castitatis et omnis circa sexum sanctitatis, qui tenuissimum filum disciplina ejusmodo veri avia pendente vestigio ingrederis, carnem spiritu librans, animam fide moderans, oculum metu temperans. What is said here is, Deus bonus est. Suis, non ethnicis, sinum subjicit, secunda te poenitentia excipiet, eris iterum de moecho Christianus. The pastor described in calice is a prostitutor et ipse Christiani sacramenti, merito et ebrietatis idolum et moechiae asylum post calicem subsecuturae, de quo nihil libentius libas, quam ovem poenitentiae secundae.

the aristocracy which had come forth from the hierarchical development of the Church? If celibacy counted for the highest moral perfection, it now became peculiarly the attribute of the hierarchical class. But as the hierarchy itself was only in process of development, it could not begin all at once with what was highest in reference to morals. At a time when second marriage counted as a sort of adultery, it was very natural that the governors and heads of the Christian Church should first of all be required to refrain from it. The injunction placed by the pastoral epistles in the mouth of the apostle Paul, and meant to be regarded as an injunction given by him, that the ἐπίσκοπος should be the husband of one wife, is a precept of Church discipline as it took form during the course of the second century. The idea of the purity and holiness of the church seemed to require that it should be so.[1] Second marriage was thus to be denied to some and allowed to others. But what is the view of marriage underlying such regulations? Against those who argued for the admissibility of the second marriage from the fact that the apostle had not forbidden it to all, but only to a certain class—to the bishops—Tertullian appealed with good reason to the general priestly character of Christians, and urged that all Christians were alike priests, and that the precept given to the chief officers and in them placed at the head of the Churches, only expressed that which was to be the general rule for all.[2] But why did not the Roman Church, in its controversy with Montanism, make good the assertion it had put forward of the admissibility of second marriage, with the same force of logic,

[1] Tert. ad Ux. i. 7: Quantum detrahant fidei, quantum obstrepant sanctitati nuptiae secundae, disciplina ecclesiae et praescriptio apostoli declarat.—Aram enim Dei mundam proponi oportet. Toto illa ecclesiae candida (the halo) de sanctitate describitur. With the heathens also, he says, celibacy has this meaning. Pro diaboli scilicet aemulatione. Regem saeculi, Pontificem maximum, rursus nubere nefas est.

[2] De Monog. cap. 12. Oportebat omnem communis disciplinae formam sua fronte proponi, edictum quodammodo futurum universis impressioni (an edict which was in future to be enforced upon all), quo magis sciret plebs eum ordinem sibi observandum, qui faceret praepositos et ne vel ipse honor aliquid sibi ad licentiam quasi de privilegio loci blandiatur.

and in the same wide application as that of Tertullian on the Montanist side? It could not make up its mind to so bold a step, since the general view of the holiness of celibacy—which did not originate in Montanism, but only found its most definite expression in that sect—was rooted too deeply in the consciousness of the time to be easily got rid of.[1] In order then to unite the two positions, the genuinely Catholic adjustment was adopted, that neither the one principle nor the other was to be binding absolutely and on all, but that each was to have its application in a certain definite sphere of the life of the Church. Thus the absolute requirement which was necessarily conceived to be the true deliverance of the Christian consciousness, was at once degraded to a conditional precept. Second marriage, accordingly, though conceded to the laity, was in no case to be permitted to the bishops. But the monogamy which was thus allowed as against bigamy was itself nothing but a concession, and the original logical and consistent view soon asserted itself within the sphere which was thus marked off, and the justification even of monogamy in the case of the bishops became a matter of dispute. In proportion as the hierarchical constitution of the Church was developed to its definite form, the demands rose which were made on the bishops and on the clergy in general, with regard to married life. Even at the time of the Synod of Nicaea this process had advanced so far that the bishops there assembled were minded to make it a general law of the Church that priests, *i.e.* bishops, presbyters, and deacons, should be bound to abstain from all wedded intercourse; and this would have passed into a formal law at that time, had not the Egyptian bishop, Paphnutius—truly foreseeing the disadvantages which would be entailed upon the Church by a strict obligation to

[1] Yet among the heads of the churches there were many who were married a second time. Quot enim, Tertullian says, de Monog. cap. 12, et bigami praesident apud vos. This is confirmed by the Philosophoumena, the author of which work says, ix. 12, p. 290, that under Callistus, bishops, presbyters, and deacons, began δίγαμοι καὶ τρίγαμοι καθίστασθαι εἰς κλήρους. Εἰ δὲ καί τις ἐν κλήρῳ ὢν γαμοίη, μένειν τὸν τοιοῦτον ἐν κλήρῳ, ὡς μὴ ἡμαρτηκότα. According to Döllinger, *op. cit.* p. 140 *sq.*, the question here at issue was, whether the second marriage was contracted before or after baptism.

a continence of which not all were capable—come forward with an emphatic defence of the honour and dignity of the married state. The arguments of this bishop made the deeper impression that he himself led an ascetic life. Thus to refrain from the intercourse of marriage was left to the free choice of every individual, and the Council resolved to be content with insisting that he who had attained the clerical dignity was not at liberty, as the ancient tradition of the Church directed, to enter as a cleric into the wedded state, but that he was not obliged to separate from the wife to whom he was married already.[1] But the conclusion had already been drawn, which followed with equal necessity, both from the hierarchical position of the clergy, and from the view, by no means given up, of the sacredness of unwedded life, and the word once spoken must sooner or later realise itself in practice.

What we have remarked with reference to marriage is true of the general character of the moral notions of our period. On the one hand the moral requirement is set up as an absolute one, and in the abstract as universally binding; but in its practical application, on the other hand, it has only relative force, the moral sphere being arbitrarily divided and limited. Moral action may be, with regard to the same act, either good or bad, according as it is found in this or in that circle of the Christian life. Second marriage, for example, is allowed to the laity, but forbidden to the clergy. Such a standard of moral judgment can only be applied where in general, moral action is separated from disposition, and the true value of it sought not in what is inward, in the disposition, but in what is outward, in the appearance and the special quality of the particular act. Thus there are standing categories in accordance with which certain acts are to be viewed in reference to morality, quite independently of the disposition of the agent; and Christian ethics have by this time come to be acquainted with acts which being held sinful are simply sins; and on the other hand, with acts which are regarded as good works, and possess moral value in themselves. The Montanists were the first to divide sins

[1] Socr. E. H. i. 11.

into two classes—mortal sins and venial sins;[1] but the distinction arose precisely from that moral tendency of which we have been speaking, to limit the absoluteness of the moral requirement by giving it a limited reference, either only to a certain portion of the moral sphere, or only to a certain class of moral actions. If it is essential to the religious character of Christian ethics that acts which are repugnant to the moral law are regarded as sins, then every sin is a transgression of the divine law, and the condition of its forgiveness lies in the moral disposition of the agent, and nowhere else. Now, when certain transgressions, such as the so-called deadly sins, were marked out as being sins with regard to which the divine forgiveness must be reckoned, if not impossible, yet so doubtful that it must be left to God himself to grant it, the absolute notion of sin is in this way limited to a certain class of sins, and whatever does not belong to this category does not bear the true character of sin, but is in fact not to be regarded as sin at all, and the divine forgiveness may be taken for granted as a thing understood. But let the forgiveness of sins once be made so easy a matter—though only with reference to one definite kind of sins—and the consequence is unavoidable, that this facility of forgiveness will be extended further and further. Thus even the forgiveness of mortal sins comes, in the practice of the Church, to be no such difficult matter, as the retention of the name down to

[1] Compare Tert. de Pudic. c. 2: Alia erunt remissibilia, alia irremissibilia, secundum quod nemini dubium est, alia castigationem mereri, alia damnationem. Omne delictum aut venia dispungit aut poena: venia ex castigatione, poena ex damnatione.—Secundum hanc differentiam delictorum poenitentiae quoque conditio discriminatur. Alia erit, quae veniam consequi possit, in delicto scilicet remissibili, alia, quae consequi nullo modo possit, in delicto scilicet irremissibili. There are, says Tertullian, c. 19, quaedam delicta quotidianae incursionis, to which we are all subject. Cui enim non accidet, aut irasci inique et ultra solis occasum, aut et manum immittere, aut facile maledicere, aut temere jurare, aut fidem pacti destruere, aut verecundia aut necessitate mentiri. In negotiis, in officiis, in quaestu, in victu, in visu, in auditu quanta tentamur? ut si nulla sit venia istorum, nemini salus competat. Horum ergo erit venia per exoratorem patris Christum. Sunt autem et contraria istis, ut graviora et exitiosa, quae veniam non capiant, homicidium, idololatria, fraus, negatio, blasphemia, utique et moechia et fornicatio et si qua alia violatio templi Dei. Horum ultra exorator non erit Christus.

our own day would lead us to suppose. We see even in our period the growing tendency which prevailed, notably in the Roman Church, to make the forgiveness of sins easy to be obtained; and in proportion as the laxity increased, the earnestness of Christian morals must have sunk to a lower tone.

The sin of adultery and fornication, in the Montanist sense, was the first of the mortal sins to which, as we have already remarked,[1] the door of forgiveness was opened in the Roman church. There can be no doubt that it was the Roman bishop, Zephyrinus, who issued the peremptory edict of the Pontifex Maximus, the bishop of bishops, at which Tertullian took so great offence. Tertullian held that the indulgence thus extended to adulterers was inconsistent and went only half way; that, to be consistent, it should be extended to idolaters and murderers as well, and make shipwreck of all discipline.[2] But this inconsistency was remedied by the immediate successor of Zephyrinus. Callistus, we learn from the work of his unknown opponent, drew up, before he became bishop of Rome, a general scheme of forgiveness of sins, in which the notion of so-called mortal sins which had been up to this time in vogue, was completely done away with, and every one who had committed such a sin found the door open after the performance of penance for his reception once more to the communion of the Church.[3] And this was not a transitory phenomenon, but became

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 46.

[2] De Pudic. c. 5: Quid agis mollissima et humanissima disciplina? Aut omnibus eis hoc esse debebis (*beati enim pacifici*), aut si non omnibus, nostra esse. Idololatren quidem et homicidam semel damnas, moechum vero de medio excipis? idololatrae successorem, homicidae antecessorem, utriusque collegam.

[3] Philos. Orig. ix. 12, p. 290. The writer asserts that Callistus, as an opponent of the Church, set up a school, and was the first to think of remitting those things in which men find pleasure, saying that from him all should receive forgiveness of sins. If a Christian sinned, the sin should not be imputed to him, so soon as he resorted to the school of Callistus. This announcement was made with special reference to those who turned to the Catholic Church from a heresy or a body separated from the Church. Further, he taught that if a bishop sinned, even mortally, he ought not to be deposed; he allowed marriage to the clergy on the terms above mentioned (p. 266), and last of all allowed Christian women, who were unmarried and still in the vigour of their youth, to marry a man according to their own choice, whether a freeman, poorer than themselves,

from this time forward the standing practice of the Church, and was soon after this much confirmed by the discussions, as to the restoration of the lapsi to the Church. The persecutions of the Christians in the age subsequent to Callistus gave abundant occasion for such discussions. The view and the practice adopted by

or a slave, and thus to contract a marriage which Roman law did not recognise. Compare Döllinger, Hippolytus and Callistus, p. 125 *sq.*, where an attempt is made to determine what are the facts which give these charges whatever truth they have, and to justify what is found to be true in them, from the circumstances of the time. According to the Philosophoumena, Callistus appealed in support of his theory to such passages as Romans xiv. 4, and Matt. xiii. 30 *sq.* He also quoted Noah's ark, which contained dogs, wolves, ravens, and all sorts of beasts, clean and unclean together. So it must be, he said, in the Church. In the same connection we hear (Philos. p. 294 *sq.*) of an Alcibiades from Apamea in Syria, who came to Rome at the time of Callistus, with a book of revelations bearing the name of Elxai, on the authority of which he proclaimed a new forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness was to be given by the repetition of Christian baptism in the name of the greatest and highest God, and of his son the great King, with an invocation of the seven witnesses named in the book (heaven, water, the holy spirits, the angels of prayer, oil, salt, and earth). The formula was as follows:—*τούτους τοὺς ἑπτὰ μάρτυρας μαρτύρομαι, ὅτι οὐκέτι ἁμαρτήσω, οὐ μοιχεύσω, σὺ κλέψω, σὺκ ἀδικήσω, οὐ πλεονεκτήσω, οὐ μισήσω, οὐκ ἀθετήσω, οὐδὲ ἐν πᾶσι πονηροῖς εὐδοκήσω.* He said repeatedly: *ὦ μοιχοὶ καὶ μοιχαλίδες καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται, ἐὰν θέλητε ἐπιστρέψαι ἵνα ἀφεθήσωνται ὑμῖν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, καὶ ὑμῖν εἰρήνη καὶ μέρος μετὰ τῶν δικαίων ἀφ' οὗ ἂν ἀκούσητε τῆς βίβλου ταύτης καὶ βαπτισθῆτε ἐκ δευτέρου σὺν τοῖς ἐνδύμασι.* The data given us in the Philosophoumena and in Epiphanius, Haer. xix. 30, 53, leave us in no doubt as to the essentially Ebionitic character of the Elcesaites. Another characteristic trait is preserved in Eusebius, E. H. vi. 38, where he quotes from a homily of Origen on Psalm lxxxii., the doctrine of an Elcesaite, that he *τὸν ἀπόστολον τέλειον ἀθετεῖ*, that he rejects the apostle Paul. The author of the Philosophoumena tells us, p. 293, that he very strenuously resisted the new doctrine of Alcibiades; and thus this Alcibiades is a new member of one side of the controversy which continued throughout a long period as well in ethics as in the doctrine of the Trinity. It is remarkable how, with the Montanists, with Tertullian, with the author of the Philosophoumena, Hippolytus, or whoever it may be, and with the Novatians, these two things always belong alike to the true orthodox conception of Christianity, strictness in ecclesiastical discipline, or the notion of a church communion which excludes from itself as far as possible everything unholy, and the concrete notion of the personal Logos, while the opponents on the other side, Callistus and Alcibiades the Elcesaite or Ebionite, are equally lax on the one point as on the other. The Ebionites, it is well known, rejected the doctrine of the *λόγος θεός*. Compare Ritschl, über die Secte der Elcesaiten, in the Zeitschr. für histor. Theol. 1853, p. 573 *sq.* Entstehung der alt-kath. Kirche, 2d ed. p. 234. Hilgenfeld, Zeitschr. für Wissensch. Theol. 1858, p. 417.

the Roman Church with regard to the lapsi are best known from the document addressed to Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, by the presbyters and deacons of Rome when occupied with filling up the Roman episcopal seat after the martyrdom of Fabianus. According to this epistle there was no longer any question as to the permissibility of receiving persons in such a position; but care was to be taken that that communion of the Church by which the wound was healed should not be granted too hastily or without a proper period of penance. This was counted even then as the antiqua severitas, antiqua fides, antiqua disciplina, and the writer of the Epistle[1] was that Novatian, who did indeed return afterwards to the old strictness of the penance which the Church enjoined, but could only assert it as a schismatic.

Over against mortal sins stand good works. They are to be regarded from the same point of view. As the former are simply sins, the latter are in themselves good. According to this notion of good works practical duty is limited to a certain class of actions —particularly such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. To such an extent is this the case, that whatever does not belong to one or other of these categories appears to have no definite moral value. Here at length we see clearly and distinctly how in general the moral standard which here determines what is and what is not moral action, is not a standard of quality of the disposition, but a standard of quantity of the outward performance. Though a greater or less quantum of good works is required of every Christian, yet the highest cannot be made the duty of every individual, a man can do more than he is in fact obliged to do, and as every good action is morally meritorious, there are not only meritorious but also supermeritorious actions. It is a very significant fact with reference to the ethics in process of formation in the Catholic Church, that this distinction, one of such importance and coming so near the heart of the subject, was made by the first writer of the Roman Church who describes the sphere of Christian morality.

[1] It is to be found among the Epistles of Cyprian, as Ep. 31. Compare Ep. 52, 53.

In the fifth parable of the third book of the Shepherd of Hermas, the shepherd appears in the form of an angel to Hermas, who is sitting at the time of fasting upon a mountain, and instructs him as to the true kind of fasting, showing by the example of a servant at work in a vineyard who does more than his master has commanded him, that the true fasting is the observance of the commandments of God.[1] In the explanation of the parable it is said: "Keep the commandments of the Lord, and thou shalt be approved, and enter into the number of those who keep his commandments. But if, besides that which the Lord has commanded, thou shalt do something good in addition, thou shalt acquire for thyself a greater dignity and have more honour with the Lord than thou wouldst have had otherwise." That this is very characteristic of the ethical spirit of the time we see from various indications. Not only does such a writer as Hermas speak of an adjicere aliquid boni, but even Origen places the conduct which Christian morality requires under the point of view of this double task. So long, Origen says,[2] as a man does merely what he ought, *i.e.* what is commanded, he is an unprofitable servant (Luke xvii. 10). But if he does something in addition to what is commanded, he is not merely an unprofitable servant, but it is said to him: "Thou good and faithful servant" (Matt. xxv. 15). And what it is that is added to the commandment and is done in addition to what it is a man's duty to do, the apostle Paul tells us in 1 Cor. vii. 25. This goes beyond the commandment. He then, who, after doing what is commanded, does this in addition to it, and preserves his virginity, is no unprofitable servant, but is called a good and faithful servant. And the case is the same when in spite of the commandment that the preachers of the gospel should live by the gospel, the apostle Paul says that he

[1] L. 3. Simil. 5. 1: Jejuna certe verum jejunium tale. Nihil in vita tua nequiter facias, sed mente pura servi Deo, custodiens mandata ejus et in praecepta ejus ingrediaris, neque admiseris desiderium nocens in animo tuo. Crede autem Domino, si haec feceris, timoremque ejus habueris, atque abstinueris ab omni negotio malo, Deo te victurum. Haec si feceris, jejunium magnum consummabis acceptumque Domino. Thus fasting itself is taken in an ideal sense.

[2] Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, iii. 3.

had made no use of this (1 Cor. ix. 15). Repugnant as the notion of such a super-merit of moral action is to the spirit of the gospel, yet many tendencies co-operated from which it followed as a very natural consequence. First of all it had its root in the general way of thinking with regard to morals which was mentioned above. In respect to the question here before us, that way of thinking found characteristic expression in the phrases adjicere aliquid boni, addere aliquid preceptis, because the view it took of moral action was that it was a matter of quantity. If demands are set up which cannot be carried out with strict consistency in practice, and so cannot have the same binding force on all, and with regard to marriage this was involved in the nature of the case, the natural result is, that there comes to be an aristocratic distinction not only of two ranks but also of two degrees of virtue, and thus also of two degrees of merit, one of which is sufficient for men as they commonly are; while the higher one is for those who feel within themselves the impulse and the call not to stand still at the ordinary average level. But in addition to this the whole tendency of moral action at this time towards external ecclesiastical legality, the desire and effort to set up a norm for moral actions in special commands, to classify them and define their limits with regard to each other, this tendency could not but engender the opinion that a man could indeed do more than was outwardly commanded; but that if he observed what was commanded within a certain circle, the merit was sufficient to satisfy the claims of Christian virtue and perfection.

As the essence of Christian morality is placed principally in external action, in works, it is also impressed with a peculiar stamp by the fact that the actions to which it refers are not only prescribed by the Church, but have their common unity in the idea of the Church. Here it is curious to notice how even in the Shepherd of Hermas the whole moral conduct of Christians is determined by the idea of the Church. The Church is represented under the image of a tower, around which seven women are standing who support it according to the command of the Lord. The

first is faith, by which the elect of God are saved. The daughter of faith is continence; he who follows her becomes happy in his life, because he refrains from all bad works. The other five also are intimately related, each being a daughter of another; they are called Simplicity, Innocence, Modesty, Discipline, Love (Charitas). From faith springs continence, from continence simplicity, from simplicity innocence, from innocence modesty, from modesty discipline and love. He who serves these, and is able to practise the works belonging to them, will dwell in the tower with the saints of God. The same idea is worked out at greater length in the ninth parable. Here the Church is represented by twelve virgins. The four highest are Faith, Continence, Might, Patience; then follow Simplicity, Innocence, Chastity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Insight, Concord, and Love. Over against them stand twelve women dressed in black—Faithlessness, Excess, Unbelief, Sensuality, Sadness, Malice, Desire, Anger, Untruth, Folly, Arrogance, and Hatred. All the stones which are not carried by the former virgins through the gate of the rock, which is the Son of God, into the tower, to build it, are rejected; and the women in black clothes carry the stones which are declared unfit for use, back to the place whence they were taken. So essentially does Christianity, here realising in itself the idea of the Church, consist in the practice of the virtues, the sum of which amounts to the keeping of the divine commandments. Faith, which stands at the head of all the virtues, is itself only the root of virtue, the evangelical notion of faith gives place to the predominant tendency towards the practical and the moral. In fact, in the thought of Hermas, faith is simply the command which stands before all the other commands, to believe in the one God, who made all things out of nothing. Thus we find expressed even here what is the root-idea of Catholicism, that the essence of Christianity consists not so much in faith as in works, or in the practice of the virtues. And what gives the virtues—the general forms of moral behaviour—their specially Christian character, is simply that it is the Church (which appears in person in the Shepherd of Hermas for this purpose) that gives

the exhortation to cultivate them, and issues the precepts with reference to them in the form of divine commands.[1] The characteristic feature of the Christian morality of the period we are dealing with, as seen in all the phenomena now noticed, is that in its main tendency it bears the likeness of later Catholicism. But on the other side there are not wanting traits in which the purer moral spirit of evangelical Christianity asserts itself. Of the doctors of the Church whose views and principles call for most consideration on this point, no one stands out more than Clement of Alexandria. It is true that he is one of the chief representatives of the extreme tendency of the times which aimed at detachment from everything material; for in his Gnostic he set up the ideal of a perfection, the highest aim of which is to make man divine by perfect freedom from passion.[2] Yet all the more do we see in him the operation of evangelical truth, when, with regard to those circumstances of practical life in which the ascetic spirit of the age proved itself most one-sided, he was able to maintain the healthy sense of practical Christianity which as far as possible keeps at a distance from extremes. With regard to marriage no doctor expressed so sensible

[1] Compare L. 1, Vis. iii. 8. L. 3. Simil, ix. 15.

[2] Compare, *e.g.*, the passage in the Miscellanies iv. 22. *Αὕτη ἡ κατὰ δύναμιν ἐξομοίωσις πρὸς Θεὸν τὸ φυλάττειν τὸν νοῦν ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ σχέσι· αὕτη δὲ νοῦ σχέσις ὡς νοῦ· ἡ δὲ ποικίλη διάθεσις γίνεται τῇ πρὸς τὰ ὑλικὰ προσπαθείᾳ.* Comp. die christl. Gnosis, p. 506 *sq.* It is not less characteristic of Clement that above all those attainments which are possible in the way of the spirit's withdrawing from the material into itself, and being absorbed in itself, he places the practical exercise of moral conduct. He regards the vindication of the former standpoint by the energy of practice as the true Gnosticism, as the positive which must be added to the former, which is negative. Compare on this point, *e.g.*, Misc. vi. 7: the Gnostic soul is sanctified *κατὰ τὴν ἀποχὴν τῶν γεωδῶν πυρώσεων, ἁγνίζεται δὲ καὶ τὸ σῶμα, ἐν ᾧ οἰκεῖ, ἐξιδιοποιούμενον εἰς εἰλικρίνειαν ἁγίου νεῶ· ὁ δὲ ἐν τῷ σώματι καθαρισμὸς τῆς ψυχῆς πρώτης πρῶτος οὗτός ἐστιν ἡ ἀποχὴ τῶν κακῶν, ἣν τινες τελείωσιν ἡγοῦνται· καὶ ἔστιν ἁπλῶς τοῦ κοινοῦ πιστοῦ, Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἕλληνος, ἡ τελείωσις αὕτη, τοῦ δὲ γνωστικοῦ μετὰ τὴν ἄλλοις νομιζομένην τελείωσιν ἡ δικαιοσύνη εἰς ἐνέργειαν εὐποιΐας προβαίνει. καὶ ὅτῳ δὴ ἡ ἐπίστασις τῆς δικαιοσύνης εἰς ἀγαθοποιΐαν ἐπιδέδωκεν, τούτῳ ἡ τελείωσις ἐν ἀμεταβόλῳ ἕξει εὐποιΐας καθ' ὁμοίωσιν τοῦ Θεοῦ διαμένει.* In the same way he demands, Misc. iv. 6, that one should be *οὐκ ἀποχῇ κακῶν μόνον δικαιωθεὶς, πρὸς δὲ καὶ τῇ κυριακῇ τελειωθεὶς εὐποιΐᾳ.* The spirit retires into itself, but only to work all the more energetically outwards in moral conduct.

an opinion as Clement. He pronounces eunuchism to be a special gift of God, and ascribes special honour to monogamy; but, on the other hand, he does not reject second marriage. Those who called marriage fornication, and appealed to the example of Christ, he met by saying that the reason why the Lord did not marry was that the Church was his bride, and that as a man not of ordinary nature, he was not in need of a helpmate according to the flesh. As little did he need to beget children as he remained eternally the Son of God. But Christ himself said that man was not to put asunder what God had joined together. Equally far were the Apostles from rejecting marriage. Peter and Philip begot children, Philip gave his daughters in marriage, and Paul also did not shrink from speaking of a σύζυγος in one of his epistles. Eunuchism was no virtue if it did not proceed from love to God.[1] Not only does Clement not allow that celibacy has any absolute advantage over married life, but he recognises the importance of marriage in ethics. It forms, he says, a peculiar sphere of social life, in which moral power can display itself. The perfect man who makes the Apostles his examples, shews himself a true man by not choosing a life of solitude. He gains a victory over men if he lives in marriage, begets children, and cares for his household, and yet is not drawn away by this care from the love of God, but withstands all temptations that arise to him out of his children and wife, his domestics and possessions. He who has no household, remains free from many temptations; but as he only cares for himself, he stands lower than he who, though he cannot devote the same care to his own salvation, yet possesses in the economy of life a more than equivalent advantage, inasmuch as he, in fact, presents on a small scale a likeness of the true universal providence.[2] In respect of marriage accordingly, Clement goes back to the disposition with which one chooses the life of marriage or of celibacy. In the same way, in the work he devoted to the discussion of the question, "What rich man is he who is saved?" he makes everything depend on the inward attitude taken up towards outward possessions, and the use

[1] Misc. iii. 1, 6. [2] Misc. vii. 12.

that is made of them. The true rich man is he only who is rich in virtues, and can live in every relation of life purely and faithfully; the false rich man is the rich man according to the flesh, who makes his life depend on an outward possession, which comes and disappears, which passes from one to another, and at last belongs to no one at all.[1] Thus Clement looks at the various relations of life and at the question specially pressing at the time, from a genuinely moral point of view, and with regard to the interests of practical Christianity. And in the same spirit did he speak on the subject of martyrdom. Highly as he values martyrdom he yet disapproves of that fanatical eagerness for it which disregards all prudence in dangers, and accordingly does not condemn flight in persecutions in the unconditional way that Tertullian does.[2] The essence of martyrdom, according to him, lies in purifying oneself with illustrious success from sins, and suffering willingly all that the confession of Christianity requires.[3] As Clement was free from Montanist fanaticism and onesidedness, and not only so, but from the belief in the nearness of the Parousia and the catastrophe of the world, he was able to retain the right point of view for the moral relations of life, which that belief was so apt to disturb.[4]

In the views and principles which prevail in it we read the moral spirit of an age, but of whatever nature the views and principles may be which belong to the general consciousness of the age, they afford us no correct standard for judging of its moral character. To do this we require to know how those views and

[1] Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος, cap. 19.

[2] De fuga in persecutione.

[3] Clement discusses at length the subject of martyrdom in the fourth book of the Stromata; compare c. 9, 10.

[4] What a contrast there is in this particular between his view of marriage and the begetting of children, and that of Tertullian. The latter says, ad Ux. i. 5: Adjiciunt sibi homines causas nuptiarum de sollicitudine posteritatis et liberorum amarissima voluptate. Nobis otiosum est. Nam quid gestiamus liberos gerere, quos cum habemus, praemittere optamus, respectu scilicet imminentium angustiarum, cupidi et ipsi, inquissimo isto saeculo eximi? Everything referring to married life is merely a sarcina nuptiarum. Why should one marry, why have children, why enter into the relations of life at all, which are the true sphere of moral action? Fuga saeculi thus becomes a flight from the world of moral action.

principles are carried out in practical life; whether the prevailing tendency is that which would hold them fast in their original strictness, or that which would more and more have them relaxed. It has been sufficiently shown how decisive a turning-point is marked in this particular by the Montanist period, since Montanism can only be regarded as a reaction against a relaxation of the practice of the Christian life which had been going on for some time and still continued. The works of Tertullian which relate to the practical questions of the day, are in this view a peculiarly abundant source for the history of Christian morals. We learn from them by what arguments it was sought to excuse and justify the mitigations of the old strictness, and what the phenomena were in which the new and freer tendency appeared most noticeably. How greatly, for example, must that enthusiasm for martyrdom in which the moral force by which the Christians were inspired reached its floodmark, have cooled down even in the time of Tertullian, when flight in persecution was so lightly thought of as Tertullian's denunciations of it would lead us to conclude—if the Christians scrupled so little to make use of the modes of deception by which it was possible to induce the heathen authorities to desist from a prosecution—if even whole churches with their clergy at their head, had recourse to such a way of escape?[1] How greatly this want of courage and steadfastness increased afterwards, and how often it resulted even in relapse to heathenism, we see from the existence of the various kinds of Lapsi. In general, as the persecutions ceased, and the Christians lived outwardly in rest and at peace, those virtues became rarer which we are accustomed to think of as the high distinction of the earliest period, and in their place appeared exactly the contrary qualities. Eusebius himself insists upon this fact,[2] and, in fact, makes the remark in

[1] De fuga in persec. c. 13: Massaliter totae ecclesiae tributum sibi irrogaverunt. Nescio dolendum an erubescendum sit, cum in matricibus beneficiariorum et curiosorum inter tabernarios et inaneos et fures balnearum et aleones et lenones Christiani quoque vectigales continentur. Hinc episcopatui formam apostoli providentius condiderunt, ut regno suo securi frui possent sub obtentu procurandi?

[2] E. H. viii. 1.

passing to speak of the Diocletian persecution of the Christians. And this persecution he regards as the well-deserved punishment of the laxity and indifference, the envy, the abusiveness and contentiousness, the hypocrisy and misrepresentation which had made such inroads among the Christians. Nor did the bishops fail to exhibit, even at this period, as several well-known examples prove, that lofty arrogance and hierarchical desire of rule which have since continued to be characteristic of their order.

Sharply and energetically as the moral and religious character of Christianity was opposed to the notions and views of the heathen world, the antithesis yet passed more and more out of sight as the prevailing views and principles became by degrees larger and freer, and as it came to be made the first consideration to find out what was possible in practice and appropriate to the circumstances. It is from this point of view that we have to regard the course taken by the Christian cultus even at the very beginning of its development.

The apostle Paul stands at the extreme point of the antithesis against the forms of the cultus of heathenism and of Judaism, when addressing the Galatians who had been converted from heathenism to Christianity, but were now at the verge of falling back to the *στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου* which heathenism and Judaism had in common, he asks (iv. 8 *sq.*) how they can reconcile it with their Christian consciousness of God, that they should turn back to the beggarly elements to which they had formerly done service, and direct themselves according to days and months, and times and years? So unworthy of the Christian does everything appear to him to be, that would draw down the free spirit, conscious of its communion with God, to the elements and phenomena of the outward and material life of nature, and bind the spirit to them as if it could not reach God, except by their mediation. And we have to think of this free Christianity, independent of everything external, conscious of its purely spiritual contents, but in outward appearance naked and devoid of all forms of cultus, when we find that even at the time of Celsus what struck the heathens most

with regard to the Christians, was that they appeared to possess none of those things without which they did not see how a religion could exist—no temples, no altars, no images.[1] If a cultus answers more or less perfectly to the religion the idea of which it has to represent and bring to view, in proportion to the dignity and interest of its form, how entirely must Christianity have been wanting in the first pre-requisite of an æsthetical cultus, when the idea it was thought necessary to entertain of Christ himself was that in his outward form he was insignificant, or even ugly?[2] What lasting effects this character of Christian worship, derived originally from Paulinism, but afterwards impressed by a one-sided ascetic spiritualistic, puritanical tendency, had on the history of the first centuries, we learn from a Spanish synod, which, though it met in an age when Christian worship had found shelter within stately buildings, forbade pictures on the walls, because it saw in such representations of sacred objects a degradation of what was holy.[3]

But though Christianity seemed, when opposed to heathenism and Judaism, to have little capacity for a cultus like that of those religions, yet it embraced in the view and in the mood on which its religious consciousness was based, the elements of a cultus of its own. The Christian cultus proceeded entirely from that relation of piety which connected the first disciples with the Lord, the relation being seized in the fashion in which at his last interview with them it had received its richest and most touching expression. As the disciples had been together with him then, so Christians wished to be together with him again and again. As often as the believers came together they sought to realise the presence of the Lord still

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 159, and Minucius Felix Octav. cap. 10, where the heathen asks, cur nullas aras habent, nulla templa, nulla nota simulacra?

[2] He is expressly thus called by Justin, Tertullian, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria. The last says, The Instructor, iii. 1: *τὸν κύριον αὐτὸν τὴν ὄψιν αἰσχρὸν γεγονέναι διὰ Ἡσαΐου τὸ πνεῦμα μαρτυρεῖ* (Isa. liii. 2). Here, as elsewhere (compare vol. i. p. 41, note), the prophets were employed to fill up the omissions of the evangelical history.

[3] The Synod at Elvira in the year 305, Canon 36: Placuit picturas in ecclesia esse non debere, ne quod colitur et adoratur, in parietibus depingatur.

remaining in the circle of his own, and it was impossible to be together with him without doing what he had done the last time he was with his disciples.[1] They ate the bread as his body, and drank the wine as his blood. The apostle Paul is the first to report the words of the Lord as he himself received them from Christian tradition. But so far is he removed from all those notions which afterwards caused the dogmatic view of the sacrament to be imported into the words, and rendered them a cause and source of such great debates and divisions, that he regards the repetition of what Jesus had done as an act merely of commemoration meant to show forth his death only until he himself should come. It was to serve as a compensation for his bodily presence which death had removed: in the bread and wine, as the body and blood of the Lord, which he himself had said they were, it was to represent himself as he was, when face to face with death he was about to shed his blood for the institution of a new covenant, and to give his body for his disciples. In connection with the bread, broken and divided into pieces, the apostle thought of the Church as the body of the Lord, since as it is one and the same loaf of which all partake, so the many members of which the church is composed are all connected together in the unity of one and the same church.[2] As at the meal which Jesus ate with his disciples, he began the act in question by a prayer of thanksgiving, so the Christian celebration of the supper was most commonly called the Eucharist. The thanksgivings which were spoken on the occasion referred first of all to the life-sustaining gifts of nature which were brought to the common meal, but their connection with the words of the institution by Jesus gave them the force of a peculiar consecration, for the elements of the supper which were set aside from these gifts. Accordingly, in describing the celebration, Justin says[3] that the deacons, who stood by the president, distributed the bread which was blessed by the words of the Eucharist, and the wine,

[1] *Vide supra*, vol. i. p. 169.
[2] 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. Compare xii. 27.
[3] Apol. i. 66 *sq.*

mixed with water, not only to all present, but also to the absent.[1] The celebration was also called by the name Agape; the meal of commemoration of the death of the Lord was also to be a meal of that love which united the disciples among one another. But many things which at first, from the nature of the case, belonged together and fitted easily into the ordinary arrangement of life, could not afterwards, when the churches increased in numbers, be kept up in the same way. And so the name Agape was transferred almost entirely to meals which were distinct from the Eucharist, in which, by a system of mutual contributions to the common table, the difference between rich and poor was to be obliterated, and an opportunity given for the continuous exercise of that brotherly love and common spirit which dwelt in the oldest assemblies of the disciples. Thus the two things which were at first united with each other became distinct, and each underwent modifications in its own peculiar direction. The Agape became a freer union of Christian social life, but easily degenerated into abuses, while the Eucharist on the other hand obtained, by means of its liturgical forms, its definite ecclesiastical character.[2] The original feeling of piety out of

[1] Even this points to the circumstance, that the notion of a material means of salvation was connected with the bread of the Eucharist when consecrated as the body of the Lord, and that people kept it with them to eat a part of it from time to time. It is the acceptum corpus Domini et reservatum, of Tertullian: de Orat. c. 19. The reference is the same when Tertullian asks the Christian wife of a heathen husband: ad Uxorem ii. 5 :—Non sciet maritus, quid secreto ante omnem cibum gustes? et si sciverit panem, non illum credit, qui dicitur (if you tell him it is bread, he will not believe that it is what you say—what the Christians according to the letter of Pliny asserted that it was—cibus promiscuus et innoxius).

[2] We see from 1 Cor. xi. 20 *sq.*, that the meals to which the Christians came together to celebrate the Eucharist were also Agapae. The disorders which the Apostle had occasion to rebuke even then, made it impossible, as he said, to celebrate a supper of the Lord κυριακὸν δεῖπνον φαγεῖν, *i.e.* to celebrate the Eucharist, at these meetings, as ought to be the case. Disorders of the same kind took place at the Agapae which are spoken of under this name in the Epistle of Jude, ver. 12. In the Epistle of Ignatius, Ep. ad Smyrn. cap. 8: οὐκ ἐξὸν χωρὶς ἐπισκόπου οὔτε βαπτίζειν οὔτε ἀγάπην ποιεῖν, the Agape includes the Eucharist. Tertullian still speaks of a convivium dominicum, ad Ux. ii. 4: but in the Apology, cap. 39, he speaks of the coena, which is called Agape as being

which the Christian cultus sprang and developed itself in different directions maintained itself in its purest and directest form in the Paschal celebration of the Church of Asia Minor. The reason why this church clung to the 14th of Nisan with such force and pertinacity and with so real and deep an interest as that which is expressed in the Epistle of Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus,[1] was that that day was kept as the anniversary of the last meal of which Jesus had partaken with his disciples. They therefore restricted their celebration to this one day and did not as it appears determine the celebration of the day of the death and of the resurrection in accordance with this day, which of course changed from year to year. The Roman Church on the contrary, feeling it to be of the greatest importance to have firmly settled liturgical forms, regulated the whole of the Paschal celebration with reference to the day of the resurrection, which was never changed. Sunday thus remaining the day which was fixed for the anniversary of the resurrection, the days of the original Paschal week came to regulate not only the cycle of the week, but also the cycle of the year. As every Sunday brought back the thought of the resurrection, so the faithful Christian was to remember on the Wednesday and Friday of every week what had happened in the Paschal week on these days. On Wednesday the Lord's passion had begun with the resolution arrived at by the Sanhedrim to arrest him,[2] on Friday he had died. These are the dies stationum, on which the Christian was to stand upon his guard fasting, as a miles Christi,

simply a meal, and of the need that it should not become liable to the reproach of luxury. At the close of his work, de Jejun., in which he speaks as a Montanist to the Psychici, he gives himself the strongest confirmation of that reproach, apud te agape in caccabis fervet, fides in culinis calet, spes in ferculis jacet. Sed majoris est agape (ironical allusion to 1 Cor. xiii. 13), quia per hanc adolescentuli tui cum sororibus dormiunt. Appendices scilicet gulae lascivia atque luxuria est. Did the character of the Agapae deteriorate so much in so short a time, or may we look upon this as a criterion to determine Tertullian's apologetical trustworthiness?

[1] Vide supra, vol. i. p. 164.

[2] Cf. the fragment of a λόγος εἰς τὸ πάσχα, by Peter, Bishop of Alexandria at the end of the third century, in Routh, Reliquiae Sacrae, iii. p. 343.

and to go off guard at a certain hour.[1] When the day came round in the cycle of the year it had of course to be celebrated with greater circumstance. The fast was extended and the whole week received the character of a holy week as in fact it is designated in the Johannine Gospel, xii. 1, that gospel harmonising with the Roman Paschal celebration. Another observance which contributed to exalt the celebration of the passover was the vigils, for which there was a meeting during the night before the festival, in order that the believers might be awake to greet the dawn of the sacred day.[2]

In addition to the impulse which the last meal of Jesus with his disciples naturally gave to the rise and formation of a Christian cultus, Sunday, made sacred by his resurrection, afforded to that cultus a point of departure, and was mainly the means of carrying it on. There is no doubt that Sunday is the ἡμέρα κυριακή, on which the seer of the Apocalypse fell into his ecstasy, i. 10, and the μία σαββάτων, the first day of the week, on which Paul wished that the contributions to the subsidy he had set on foot, should be collected, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. According to Justin[3] all the Christians who lived in the towns and in the country came together on the day of the sun, to hear the reading of the memorials of the apostles and of the writings of the prophets, for prayer, and for the celebration of the Eucharist, because it was on this day that at the beginning God scattered the darkness and created the world, and Jesus Christ our Redeemer arose from the dead and appeared to his disciples. The sacred day of the Jewish and that of the Christian cultus stood side by side, having the same

[1] Tert. de orat. cap. 10: statio de militari exemplo nomen accepit, nam et militia Dei sumus. De cor. cap. 14: stationibus quartam et sextam dicamus.

[2] Even Tertullian speaks of the vigils as a part of the Paschal celebration. In the work ad Ux. ii. 4, he asks the Christian wife whether her heathen husband would quietly allow that she solemnibus Paschae abnoctire? Compare as to these vigiliae, παννυχίδες, Euseb. E. H. vi. 34; Clem. Alex. Miscell. i. 21. The reference is probably to these vigils when we hear of the convocationes nocturnae, coetus antelucani, of the Christians; and the practice spoken of in the Epistle of Pliny, stato die ante lucem convenire may point to the same thing.

[3] Apol. i. 67.

religious meaning, but indicating different orders of calculation, the Sabbath being the last day of the week, and Sunday the first. The fact of this difference made Christians the more inclined to keep Sunday, on which day they prayed not kneeling but standing, and never fasted.[1] In order to mark yet more strongly the contrast between the two days, the anti-judaistic tendency of the Roman Church had led it at the time of Tertullian to adopt the practice of continuing the fast of Friday on Saturday as well.[2] An approach was made to the idea of the Sabbath in the long-established custom of desisting from ordinary business on Sunday as far as possible.[3]

At the close of the second century and the beginning of the third, Christianity had come to be surrounded with a set of manifold religious forms, partly peculiar to itself, partly borrowed from Judaism and heathenism. Baptism and the Lord's Supper which Justin describes as being in his day simple religious acts, were now accompanied by symbolical practices and mystical ideas,[4] which invested these two principal constituents of the Christian cultus with a significance similar to that of the heathen mysteries. We see even at this period that in proportion as a new hierarchy

[1] Tert. de cor. 3.

[2] Tertullian de Jejunio, c. 14: Vos (the psychici) etiam sabbatum, si quando, continuatis, nunquam nisi in pascha jejunandum. They were to fast on the Easter Saturday, but on no other Sabbath than this one. Tertullian thought he owed so much regard to the Sabbath, because Christ himself affectum creatoris expressit in sabbato non jejunandi honore. Adv. Marc. iv. 12. The Roman custom prevailed in the west to such a degree, that the Synod of Elvira ordained in its 26th canon, errorem placuit corrigi, ut omni sabbati die superpositiones (the continuation of the fast of Friday) celebremus.

[3] Tert. de orat. cap. 23. Sicut accepimus solo die dominicae resurrectionis—anxietatis habitu et officio (this is the true reading, not officia, in distinction from the negotia which follows), cavere debemus, differentes etiam negotia, ne quem diabolo locum demus.

[4] On the usages connected with baptism see Tertullian de spectac. cap. 4; Adv. Prax. cap. 26; De bapt. cap. 7; De cor. cap. 3; Adv. Marc. i. 14. By the chrisma, the ἀντίτυπον, οὗ ἐχρίσθη Χριστὸς, as Cyril of Jerusalem calls it (Catech. mystag. 3, 1) Cyprian declares, Ep. 70, that the person baptized becomes an unctus Dei, and can have in himself the grace of Christ, *i.e.* according to the meaning of the name Christus the act makes him a Christian. In connection with the Lord's Supper, Justin, Apol. i. 66, thinks of its analogy with the mysteries of Mithra, and Origen speaks of Christian mysteries.

was developed in the Christian Church under the influence of the sacerdotal ideas of the Old Testament, those things which it had to administer could not but become more full of meaning and of mystery. Gnostics who desired to see Christianity separated as rigidly as possible from everything Jewish and heathen, were blamed by Tertullian, and not without reason, because they knew nothing of such a distinction of grades and classes as the order and dignity of Christian worship required.[1] It was especially Marcion who declared that the separation of the catechumens from the faithful which was even then tending to become the practice, was un-Pauline.[2] The Christian Church as well as the heathen temple, had now its altar,[3] its priests, its sacrifices, and Cyprian speaks not only of the sacrifice of prayer, but of the true and perfect sacrifice which the priest, standings in the place of Christ, and doing in imitation of Christ what he did first, presents in the Church to God the Father.[4]

Christ having died at the Jewish passover, and as Christianity could not in its ritual any more than in other points deny its connection with Judaism, Easter and Pentecost continued to be the chief festivals of the Christian cultus. But even the Apostle Paul had called Christ the passover lamb slain for the Christians (1 Cor. v. 7), and thus just at the point where the Christian cultus had its connection with the Jewish, every part of it was invested

[1] Tert. de praescr. haer. c. 41: Non omittam ipsius etiam conversationis haereticae descriptionem, quam futilis, quam terrena, quam humana sit sine gravitate sine auctoritate sine disciplina ut fidei suae congruens. Imprimis quis catechumenus, quis fidelis, incertum est; pariter adeunt, pariter audiunt, pariter orant, ethnici, si supervenerint; sanctum canibus et porcis margaritas, licet non veras, jactabunt. Simplicitatem volunt esse prostrationem disciplinae (treading under foot the order of the Church, they call this simplicity), cujus penes nos curam lenocinium vocant. Ante sunt perfecti catechumeni quam edocti. Ordinationes eorum temerariae, leves, inconstantes. Alius hodie episcopus, cras alius; hodie diaconus, qui cras lector, hodie presbyter, qui cras laicus. Nam et laicis sacerdotalia munera injungunt.

[2] For this he appealed to Gal. vi. 6. He interpreted this passage, Jerome tells us in his Commentary on the Epistle, in such a way, ut putaret fideles et catechumenos simul orare debere et magistrum communicare in oratione discipulis, illo vel maxime elatus, quod sequatur: in omnibus bonis.

[3] Tert. de orat. 14: nonne solemnior erit statio tua, si et ad aram Dei steteris?

[4] Ep. 62.

with a higher significance, and the conflict of feelings and moods, in the sphere of which every more highly developed cultus moves, became richer and more intense. In the period of fasting which preceded the passover, the Christian, in sympathy with the Redeemer, had gone into all the sorrows of his passion; in the joy of the resurrection in the Quinquagesima which followed Quadragesima, he was at liberty, as Tertullian expresses it,[1] omni exaltatione decurrere, and this joy, exalting and strengthening his self-consciousness remained with him as the feeling deeper than all others, accompanying him in all the changes of his life, and always proving more than a match for gloom and sorrow.

The same testimony to the prevailing gladness of the Christians is borne, and in a marked manner by another branch of the Christian cultus, which proceeded at a very early date partly from the Christian feeling of piety, and partly from a view of the relation of the human to the divine, which was akin to the heathen religion.

The Christians of the first age held very sacred the memory of the departed, and had a lively sense of continued communion with them, and on the anniversaries of their deaths honoured them with prayers and oblations. Especially were the days on which the martyrs had finished their victorious struggle celebrated in the most joyful way, not as death-days, but as birthdays. In this way the Church of Smyrna kept the anniversary of the martyrdom of Polycarp its bishop.[2] Legend afterwards adorned still further the miracle of his death; it was said that his body was not consumed by the flames, but transfixed with a dagger and that a dove flew out of it.[3] This dove is the symbol of the power of the Holy

[1] De Jejun. cap. 14.

[2] Compare the letter of the Church of Smyrna on the martyrdom of Polycarp in Eusebius iv. 15. The cultus of the martyrs proceeded from the same feeling of piety which prompted the worship of Christ. We worship Christ, the Smyrnaeans say as the Son of God τοὺς δὲ μάρτυρας καὶ μιμητὰς τοῦ κυρίου ἀγαπῶμεν ἀξίως, ἕνεκα εὐνοίας ἀνυπερβλήτου τῆς εἰς τὸν ἴδιον βασιλέα καὶ διδάσκαλον. Tertullian speaks, de cor. c. 3, of oblationes pro defunctis, pro nataliciis annua die, Cyprian Ep. 33, speaks not merely of sacrifices for them, but of legends, martyrum passiones, and their anniversaria commemoratio.

[3] Compare Ruinart, Acta primorum martyrum, ed. 2, 1713, pp. 35 and 43.

Ghost with which he was inspired, and after the analogy of the eagle which at the funeral of the Roman emperors announced their apotheosis, is a symbol of the new cultus of the saints, by which men were raised to divine favour. The bones of the martyrs were honoured as sacred relics, and the Christians met in pious meditation at the places where they were buried. There was also a desire to share their graves with them, and like the old Egyptian whose highest wish was to be a grave-companion of his Osiris,[1] the Christian counted it his best solace to repose by the side of his martyrs.[2] The worship of the saints is that side of the Christian

The story of the dove in the text is one of the traits added in the extended version in Eusebius, full as the original account is of legendary details. The prototype of the view expressed in the story is the account of the death of Jesus in the Johannine Gospel, where his side is said (xix. 34) to have been opened by the thrust of a spear, and not only blood, the sign of death, but also water, the emblem of the Holy Spirit, to have flowed from it. John vii. 38 *sq.*

[1] Plut. de Is. et Osir. c. 20. *ὁμοτάφους εἶναι τοῦ σώματος Ὀσίριδος.* Compare my Symbolik und Mythol. 2. 2: Stuttg. 1825, p. 412 *sq.*

[2] This is spoken of as a custom of old times by one of the most zealous worshippers of the saints, Maximus, Bishop of Turin (in the beginning of the 5th century) in his 81st Homily on the Turin martyrs, Octavius, Adventius, and Solutor. Cuncti martyres devotissime percolendi sunt, sed specialiter ii venerandi sunt a nobis, quorum reliquias possidemus—semper enim nobiscum sunt—hic ne peccatorum nos labes assumat, ibi ne inferni horror invadat. Nam ideo hoc a majoribus provisum est, ut sanctorum ossibus nostra corpora sociemus, ut dum illos tartarus metuit, nos poena non tangat, dum illos Christus illuminat, nobis tenebrarum caligo diffugiat. Cum sanctis ergo martyribus quiescentes evadamus inferi tenebras, eorum propriis meritis, attamen consocii sanctitate. Sicut eis ossibus parentum nostrorum jungimur, ita et eis fidei imitatione jungamur; in nullo enim ab ipsis separari poterimus, si sociemur illis tam religione quam corpore. Patrol. tom. lvii. p. 427. Compare Bellermann, über die ältesten christlichen Begräbnissstätten und besonders die Katakomben zu Neapel. 1839, p. 5. The worship of the saints, which was greatly developed and attained deep influence in religion during the course of the 4th century, rests essentially on the worship of relics which began at so early an age. And it is only by considering how the way of thinking arose and prevailed which lies at the root of relic and saint worship (and this is shown to us in the passage quoted), that we can understand the religious importance which in the eyes of the early Christians attached to their *κοιμητήρια* and made them *τόποι θρησκεύσιμοι* (Euseb. E. H. vii. 13). Before there were *ἐκκλησίαι*, properly so called, such as arose only in the period between Gallienus and Diocletian (Euseb. viii. 1), the *κοιμήτηρια* were the places for meditation and for religious meetings, and the notions associated with them as the resting places of the martyrs were transferred to the churches.

cultus on which it has the closest affinity with heathen usages and ideas, and manifests the greatest inclination to stretch out a hand for a near and intimate alliance with the heathenism it had overcome. It is also one of the chief elements on the foundation of which the structure of the Christian Church arose which grew to such large proportions in the next succeeding age.

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